

# STORY OF BUDDHISM

With Special Reference to South India



"Lord Buddha"

*Published by.*

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# STORY OF BUDDHISM WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SOUTH INDIA

BY

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and

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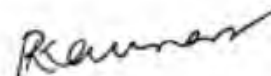
## **PREFACE**

The compilation of papers in this book deals with the history of Buddhism and historical sites relating to Buddhism in South India. The Editors are Dr. A. Aiyappan, the then Superintendent of this Museum and Thiru P.R. Srinivasan, former Curator of the Archaeology Section.

The origin and development of Buddhism is one of the most important questions in Indian History. A number of theories have been put forth to explain this question. Some think that Buddhism arose as a protestant faith to Vedic religion and thought. The period when the Buddha lived was noted for new religious experiments. Both Jainism and Buddhism are believed to have arisen as revolts against the authority of the Brahmins in religious and social life.

Buddhism came to South India during Emperor Asoka's reign. His rock edicts No.2 and No.13 reveal that Andhra, Parindra, Coda, Pandya, Sathyaputra, Keralaputra and Tamraparni were the places in South India where Emperor Asoka had religious contact with the people through his emissaries for the propagation of Buddhism (Buddha Dhamma).

In commemoration of 2500 years of Buddhism in India a function and exhibition was organised in the Madras (Chennai) Government Museum in 1956. Various authors contributed their papers on various aspects of Buddhism in South India, which were brought out in a book form. It ran out of print. It was felt that a reprint was needed. Hence it is being reprinted. I expect that the students and scholars would benefit from this volume.



(R. Kannan)

2000 AD













*Frontispiece.*



BUDDHA (bronze).  
ABOUT 968 A.D.  
*Kadri, near Mangalore.*







## WELCOME ADDRESS BY SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM, MINISTER FOR FINANCE AND EDUCATION, GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

*I am very happy to welcome the President, our Governor, and all of you, ladies and gentlemen, to this function. The Exhibition should have been opened earlier, but as we were very anxious to associate the President with this function, we had the opening postponed by three days. We are indeed happy that the Rashtrapati agreed very readily to bless our modest contribution to the Buddha Jayanti celebrations. The Emperor Asoka sent us here his first Buddhist Dharma-dutas from Pataliputra, about twenty-two hundred years ago. To-day when we pay our humble homage to the Buddha's memory, it is most auspicious that you, Sir, a most illustrious spiritual inheritor of the Buddhist tradition of service, and a son of the soil of Magadha where Buddha lived, should be in our midst. The enthusiastic way in which Buddha Jayanti is being celebrated all over India by our people, irrespective of caste and creed, has amply justified the happy decision of the Government to have a nation-wide celebration of this great occasion. It has helped us to understand the great and lasting values for which Lord Buddha worked hard for the 45 years of his mission and for which some of the greatest of his followers in this country, in the heyday of Indian Buddhism made their mighty contributions. As memories are short and we are all subject to the law of inertia, the need is always there for such celebrations to remind us of our individual and collective responsibilities to ourselves and to the larger units in which we have to play our roles, for which Lord Buddha set the ideal standard and the most effective way.*

*It gives each of us as individuals, and all of us as a nation, a sense of pardonable pride when we are reminded that Lord Buddha was an Indian and a Hindu nurtured in the upanishadic tradition. The Buddha Jayanti celebrations now going on in the great Buddhist countries of Asia also remind us of the fact that Buddhism is the greatest gift India has given to these neighbours of ours and to the world. Though there is much in this world of ours to make thinking men feel unhappy, yet there is no doubt that the world would have been a worse place than it is, had it not been for the noble teachings and personal examples of the great prophets. Twenty-five hundred years ago, the great Sakyamuni, the prince who turned into a mendicant, appeared on the Indian scene as a breath of fresh air, with his new way of life. He re-interpreted our tradition introducing new values to suit his changing times when tribal India was getting consolidated into larger and more powerful kingdoms. The personality of Lord Buddha still impresses even non-Buddhists, in spite of the passage of twenty-five centuries. Through his words enshrined in the vast sacred literature of Buddhism, any one can form an idea of the nature of the great Teacher. He was full of kindness; he never got angry; his analytical approach to problems was clear and scientific; he always advised people not to go to extremes; he told them to rely not on sentimentality and authority, but on experience and reason. The more we know of him, the better it is for individuals, groups and nations.*

S.B—ila





*Buddhism did not perhaps have the same extensive vogue in Tamil-Nad which it had in Gandhara, Punjab, the Gangetic valley or Andhra-Desa. The paucity of monumental remains of Buddhism in Tamil-Nad is explained partly by the fact that the Tamil-Nad favoured the Theravada Buddhism as in Ceylon. The Buddhist institutions of Kanchi and other places were simple and austere without any need for big temples. The images of Buddha from places in Tamil-Nad, of which you will see some originals and also photographs in the Exhibition, were marked by such austerity. Tamil and Pali literature gives us a better picture of Buddhism in Tamil-Nad.*

*Ilam Bodiya, Sanguvaranar and Sattanar were Tamil Buddhist poets of the early centuries of the Christian era. Aravuna Adigal mentioned in Manimekalai as the Buddhist Acharya responsible for the conversion of the heroine of the epic to Buddhism was probably a historical person. For a poet of Sittalai Sattanar's eminence to write an epic poem with a Buddhist nun as its heroine and her mission as its theme, Buddhism must have had a profound influence on the people of Tamil-Nad, as early as the 2nd century A.D. or even earlier.*

*The most famous son of Tamil-Nad in the history of Buddhism was Bodhi Dharma, a prince of Kanchipuram who in 520 A.D. went to China and founded the Chan or Zen school of Buddhism in China and Japan. He is known as Tamo in China and is still being paid divine honours in temples of China. You will see a portrait of Bodhi Dharma in the Exhibition. Vajrabodhi of the Pandyan country also went to China and there translated Buddhist works into Chinese.*

*Dharmapala of Kanchi who became the head of the famous Nalanda University was another great Tamilian Buddhist whose greatness was spontaneously recognized in the north.*

*Nadagutta, author of Kundalakesi Dinnaga, the great logician, Dharmapala of Tirunelveli and Buddhimitra of Ponparri (Tanjore district) were other Buddhist teachers of Tamil-Nad.*

*Buddhism in Tamil-Nad had its chief centres in Kanchi, Kaverippumpattinam, Madurai and Nagapattinam. Between these centres and Ceylon, there were close intellectual contacts for over twelve centuries. The books written in Pali by scholars of Kanchi were popular not only in South India but also in Ceylon. Dharmakirti, a Buddhist teacher and writer of the 13th century from the Pandyan country had the distinction of arranging an International Conference of Buddhists under the patronage of the King of Ceylon.*

*Buddhism and Pali provided a channel of communication between Tamil-Nad and the Gangetic valley, to the lasting and mutual benefit of both the areas, from the time of Asoka, if not earlier. In the welding of Indian culture into a great unit, Buddhism played an important part. The earliest inscription in Tamil-Nad is in the Brahmi character in which Asoka had his edicts carved, and the Tamil script we use now is derived from Brahmi, a development which we owe most probably to the Buddhists. In the field of art and architecture, too, we owe a great deal to the classical standards inspired by Buddhism.*



Lord Buddha was full of tolerance and asked his disciples not to condemn or speak ill of other faiths. Asoka followed this advice and so did his successors and we are told that in Asoka's own family there were both Buddhists and Jainas. Just as Asoka the Great, had equal consideration for all good and holy men whether Brahmana, Jaina or Buddhist, the Chola Kings, though themselves Saivites, gave generous support to Buddhist institutions. Chola endowments to the Buddhist Vihara which flourished at Nagapattinam till about the 17th century A.D. have been recorded in their copper-plate grants. In the Madras Government Museum there are a number of Buddhist bronze images which belonged to the Vihara of Nagapattinam. Some at least of the early Pallava kings also were probably Buddhists and for a time patronised Buddhism. Had this not been the case, Buddhist monasteries could not have flourished in Kanchi, the Pallava capital.

During the period of the decline of Buddhism, the relation between the Buddhists and Hindus seems to have deteriorated. But Buddhism survived in South India for a far longer period than it did in Northern India.

Sankaracharya, in his attempts to strengthen Hinduism had, of course, many encounters with the Buddhist philosophers, but the great Acharya was second to none in his admiration for Lord Buddha whom he regarded as the greatest of all Yogis of the Kali Age.

While paying our homage to the Buddha I may be permitted to refer to a popular, but unfortunate misconception about Buddhism. Buddhism, some people say, arose in opposition to Brahminism and it was anti-Brahminical, but as a matter of fact when Buddha preached, he did not preach new doctrines, but only a new Way. The Hindus then regarded Buddhists as a somewhat heterodox sect and later they revered the Buddha as an avatar of Vishnu. Several of the Buddha's disciples were Brahmins; and most of the Buddhist teachers from Southern India were Brahmins.

According to Max Muller, Buddhism "is the highest Brahminism popularised, everything esoteric being abolished, the priesthood replaced by monks, and these monks being in their true character the successors of representatives of the enlightened dwellers in the forests of former ages".

In the Exhibition which you, Sir, will presently open, some of these little known facts about Buddhism are sought to be explained and interpreted, in a popular way. The story of the beginning and expansion of Buddhism has been told through specially painted murals and photographs got from various parts of the Buddhist world. You, ladies and gentlemen, will renew your acquaintance with the famous Buddhist sculptures got here from Amaravati, the Buddha images from Kanchipuram and other places, and the relic caskets from Bhadrachalam, one of which contained a bone relic of Lord Buddha himself.

The exhibition has been got together at short notice, but I do hope you will find it interesting. Now I have great pleasure in requesting the Rashtrapati to declare the exhibition open.



## INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF RASHTRAPATI DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD.

*It gives me genuine pleasure to be associated with this function of opening the exhibition of Buddhistic art. As has been pointed out, during the last week or so, we have been celebrating the 2500th anniversary of the Parinirvana of Bhagavan Buddha. In all parts of the country, we have had meetings and other forms for expressing our deep reverence to the memory of the great Buddha. We have utilized this occasion to remind ourselves of the great teachings and the great message which the Buddha gave us and to the world at large. We have reminded ourselves how, within a short period, the teachings of the Buddha covered not only the whole of India, but also a great part of South-East Asia, Central Asia, China and Japan.*

*In India itself, Buddhism flourished for at least a thousand years of which we can justly be proud, because, it was not only a religious revival, but a revival in every sphere of life, in art, in culture and, even to-day, we see remains of what was achieved in those days by our artists. This exhibition will itself show to you what we were able to achieve in those days and how even to-day our artists are drawing inspiration from what we have of those achievements of our ancestors. It was not only in the field of art, but even more so in the spiritual field, that the Buddha lived and taught us to live. He created a new set of values for us. We were undoubtedly rich in our philosophic thought and in our metaphysical literature even before the Buddha. And it is, I believe, right to say that Buddhism is not a new faith, but only a sort of protestant schism which grew out of Hinduism.*

*It is, I believe, wrong to suggest that Buddhism was destroyed in India. As a matter of fact it was absorbed by Hinduism. It has emerged out of Hinduism and got merged into Hinduism in course of time. Its richest heritage is the heritage not only of the Buddhists alone, but of the Hindus as much. We can all claim to-day the Buddha in the truest sense as an Avatar so far as the Hindus are concerned. After all the sils which the Buddha preached is nothing but the yama and niyama of the Hindus. The same importance and emphasis are attached to life, to the control of the senses, to the principle of renunciation, in Hinduism as in Buddhism and these are the fundamental teachings of the Buddha as much as of the Upanishads. We, therefore, claim all the Buddhists as our own and we hope they treat us as their own. That is the great lesson we have to learn out of the celebrations which we have had for these several days.*

*The world to-day needs the message and the teachings of the Buddha more than ever before. With the great advance in the field of science and technology, the world has reached a stage when it must reconsider its values. And unless it is prepared to do that it must be prepared for destruction. In this age of the Hydrogen bomb, the world is bound to come back to spiritual values and to delect, if not altogether eliminate, something of the materialistic conception of life*



which dominates us to-day. We see around us signs of a reawakening in that sense and the very science which has enabled us to discover new life and new sources of strength has also given us the power to create new forces of destruction. It is a realization of the latter which will force the hands of the world, even if it is not willing to do so, to reconsider its values and re-establish the dominance of spiritualism over materialism. The Buddha Jayanti has great value from that point of view and I am only hoping that as a result of greater emphasis on the teachings of the Buddha, not only in those countries which profess to follow its faith, but also in other places, realization will dawn that after all we are not moving altogether in the right direction and that we have to change our direction.

That day is coming; it is bound to come. We have to work for it. I feel that in that respect India has a special mission. I hope I am not arrogating too much to myself when I say that we have a special mission. Our whole history, tradition and culture bear witness to the fact that we have never relied upon mere physical force. Buddhism spread throughout India and outside India without physical force. India has used force, no doubt, but never for the purpose of enforcing its views on others. Nor has India ever led a conquering army to another country in its long history. It has been subjected to invasions and has had to submit to foreign conquerors. It has fought in self-defence; but let it be said to our credit—I say to our credit and not to our discredit—that we have never led a conquering army out of the bounds of India to conquer any foreign country. That being our tradition, may we not hope that in this age we may once again give the message to the world that, after all, force, physical force, is not everything? We have managed to survive without that kind of physical force and I hope we shall live to give that message to the world some day.

To-day we are not in a position to do that, because, we are not able to make good our claim that we depend only upon spiritual force. We have won our independence, undoubtedly to a certain extent depending upon that force. But we cannot claim that it was entirely on that account that we won it. If we had won it entirely on account of that, our message would have gone to the world by now, and we need not have had to wait for Gandhiji or some others after him to come and carry that message to the world. But since we are only partially true to that message, our work has remained half done. Now that we have won independence and we are free, let us hope that the day will come when we shall be in a position to give that message in a practical way to the world by placing before it the ideal of spiritualism as against materialism.

An exhibition like the one I am going to open now, will remind us of many of the things which were done by our ancestors in the past. That will give us a glimpse into that glorious history. I can only hope that the present generation will draw inspiration from that past and will uphold the great traditions which have been built up during the centuries. In the present, we cannot afford only to be depending upon past traditions. We must build for the future, and it is for us to build a future which will be even more glorious than the past. Let us hope God will give us strength to do that.





SPEECH BY DR. A. AIYAPPAN, SUPERINTENDENT,  
MADRAS MUSEUM, PROPOSING THE VOTE OF THANKS.

*The Buddha Jayanti celebration now going on in India has been aptly described as the home-coming of Bhagwan Buddha. The Buddha age was the golden age of Indian History when Indian culture reached its mature phase. Indians then were the torch-bearers of a new humanistic movement. Through these celebrations and also through the great many things our Government are now doing for the cause of peace, we, as a nation may be said to be trying to recapture the spirit of the Buddha age.*

*The Government of Madras are the proud custodians, on the Nation's behalf, of Buddhist art treasures of the highest value and excellence in this Museum of theirs. Some of the Buddhist sculptures in the Madras Museum are internationally known. Through this exhibition, we are now able to put this interesting material across to a vast lay public who usually regard them as esoteric material, something set apart for the sophisticated scholar. A little over four years ago, the Prime Minister of India, while inaugurating the Centenary Celebration of this Museum advised us to spare no efforts to make the museum interesting and profitable to the lay man and to utilise it as an educational instrument to rouse his interest in the connected story of Indian culture. We have been trying to the best of our abilities to implement the suggestions of the Prime Minister. We, members of the staff of this Museum, consider the Buddha Jayanti celebration as another great opportunity to present to our numerous visitors the intensely interesting story of the Buddha. Very little is known of the history of Buddhism in this part of India. We have been able, even during the short time at our disposal for the preparation of this exhibition, to discover new facets of the history of Buddhism in the Madras State and also add new material to the collections already in the Museum. In order to present the story of Lord Buddha in a popular form two of our leading artists have rendered the personal and legendary history of the Buddha in about three dozen large size mural paintings which, as now arranged in the Centenary Exhibition Hall, produce what I might call an Ajanta Cave effect. The story of the growth and expansion of Buddhism is told through the medium of photographs from various parts of the Buddhist world.*

*A good deal of co-operative effort has gone into this exhibition and a number of individuals and institutions in India, China, Burma, Thailand, Japan and Indo-China have helped us. As they are too many in number to be thanked individually, I have to be content by thanking them collectively.*

*This is the first time that the Rashtrapati is visiting this Museum, but it is most encouraging to us that his first visit to this institution is on an auspicious occasion. We are all most grateful to the Rashtrapati for having graciously consented to declare the Exhibition open.*



*Our Governor has been one of the best friends of this Museum. The members of my staff and I remember gratefully the several hours which he has spent in the galleries of this Museum, always to our great profit. On your behalf and my own behalf I would thank the Governor for gracing this occasion.*

*This exhibition would not have been possible and I would not have turned out to be what it is, had it not been for the Finance Minister Sri C. Subramaniam's interest and initiative. We are most grateful to him for the opportunity, afforded to us by him to make this humble contribution towards the national celebration of the Buddha Jayanti.*













# Stotranjali

[Tributes to the Buddha]

NAMO TASSA BHAGAVATO ARAHATO SAMMASAMBUDDHASSA.

\* \* \* \* \*

புலவன் தீர்த்தன் புண்ணியன் புராணன்  
உலக நோன்பின் உயர்ந்தோய் என்கோ ;  
குற்றங் கெடுத்தோய் செற்றஞ் செறுத்தோய்  
முற்ற உணர்ந்த மூதலவா என்கோ ;  
காமந் கடந்தோய் ஏம மாவோய்  
தி நெறிக் கடுமபகை கடிந்தோய் என்கோ ;  
ஆயிர வாரத் தாழியன்றிருந்தடி  
நா வாயிமெனன் ஏததுவ தெவனென்.

O Lord ! You are the Wise, the Pure, the Pious and the Ancient, above all others in  
austerity.  
O Lord ! You destroyed the evils and discarded anger ; you are the Omniscient.  
O Lord ! You conquered Mara ; you are the Blissful ; and you condemned the unholy  
and false ways.  
O Lord ! Your feet are marked with thousand-spoked wheels.  
I do not have thousand tongues !  
How shall I praise thee !

—POET SITTALAI SATTANAR (2nd century A D.  
in *Manimekalai Katai V*, lines, 98-105).

\* \* \* \* \*

Struck with wonder, O great Leader,  
And amazed I heard your voice.  
All my perplexity has passed away,  
Fully ripe I am for this superior vehicle.

—VENERABLE SARIPUTTA addressing the Lord  
in *Saddharmapundarika*.

\* \* \* \* \*

धरावद्धं वसुधैवकुटुम्बकम्  
नियन्तानिहं न्यस्तं नासाग्रदण्डिः ।  
यः भास्ते कळी योगिनां चक्रवर्तिः  
स ह्यहः प्रबुद्धोऽसु मूर्खितवर्तिः ॥



"May the Buddha, the perfectly Enlightened, who is firmly seated on the *padmasana*, who, having controlled the breath, has turned his eyes to the tip of the nose and who, in the Kali age, has been the foremost of yogis, be the activator of my mind!"

—SRI ADI SANKARACHARYA in *Dasavatara-stotra*.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the *Matsyapurana*, Buddha is described as an *avatara* of Vishnu in the Kali age. So great was the Hindus' regard for the great Master. But a dilemma confronted them. How were they to explain away his teachings against their many articles of faith? The object of his *avatar* was to destroy the Rakshasas which he did by teaching them a false doctrine!

\* \* \* \* \*

संबुद्धं पुण्डरीकाक्षं सर्वज्ञं कल्याणस्वदम् ।  
समन्तभद्रं इति स्मृतं शास्त्रसिद्धं नमाम्यहम् ॥

"Salutation to Sakyasimha also called Samantabhadra, who is perfectly enlightened, who has eyes like the petals of a lotus, who is omniscient, who is the abode of compassion, and who is the controller (of everything)!",

—*Sambuddhanamashataka Satakam*.

\* \* \* \* \*

कदन्नान्यपि भुञ्जानि कच्चिदुदचिचासिता ।  
पण्यानो विपन्नाः क्षुण्णाः सुप्तं शोकज्वलेष्वपि ॥ ११५ ॥  
प्रहापेक्षकृताः सेवाः वेपनाश्चान्तरं कृतम् ।  
नाप वैनेयवात्सल्यात् प्रभुणापि सता स्वया ॥ ११६ ॥

"You ate even bad food, accepted hunger sometimes, trod rough paths, slept on mud trampled by cattle. Out of love for those to be trained you undertook service attended by insult and changed your dress and speech, master though you were".

—*Salapancasatika* by MATRICETA (1st century A.D.)

(Translation by S. Radhakrishnan, in *East and West :  
Some Reflections.*)

\* \* \* \* \*

"UNLIKE Buddhist professors and unlike also many Hindu students—I was going to say philosophers—I draw no distinction between the essential teachings of Hinduism and Buddhism. In my opinion, Buddha loved Hinduism in his own life. He was no doubt a reformer of his terrible time, that is to say, he was a reformer deeply in earnest and spared no pains for achieving the reform which he thought was indispensable for his own growth and for the uplift of the body. If historical records are correct the blind Brahmins of that



period rejected his reform because they were selfish. But the masses were not philosophers who whiled away their time in philosophising. They were philosophers in action; they had robust common sense and so they brushed aside the beast in the Brahmins; that is to say, selfishness, and they had no hesitation in recognising in Buddha, the true exponent of their own faith. And so being myself also one of the masses, living in their midst, I found that Buddhism is nothing but Hinduism reduced to practice in terms of the masses. And therefore sometimes learned men are not satisfied with the incredibly simple teachings of Buddha. They go to it for the satisfaction of their intellect and they are disappointed. Religion is pre-eminently a matter of the heart and a man who approaches it with intellectual pride is doomed to disappointment.

"I make bold to say that Buddha was not an atheist. God refuses to see any person, any devotee who goes to him in pride. And the masses, not knowing what pride is, approach Him in all humility and become the splendid. That, in my opinion, is the essential teaching of Buddhism. It is pre-eminently a religion of the masses. I do not despair; I do not for one moment consider that Buddhism has been banished from India. Every essential characteristic of Buddhism, I see, is being translated into action in India much more perhaps than in China, Ceylon and Japan, which nominally profess Buddhism. I make bold to say that we in India translate Buddhism into action far more and far better than our Burmese friends do. It is impossible to banish Buddha. You cannot deprive him of his birth in India. In his own life, he made out for himself an imperishable name. He lives to-day in the lives of millions of human beings. What does it matter whether we go to a little temple and worship his image or whether we even take his name. My Hinduism teaches me that if my heart is pure, I may mispronounce the name of Rama as Mara; still I can speak it with as much force as, nay, even more than the learned Brahmins. Buddha has taught us that it is not necessary for millions to associate themselves with one man who seeks for truth.

"Let each one say for himself how much of the message of mercy and piety that Buddha came to deliver he has translated into his own life. In so much as we have translated that message in our own lives are we fit to pay our homage to that great Lord, Master and Teacher of mankind. So long as the world lasts, I have not a shadow of doubt that he will rank among the greatest of teachers of mankind.

"May God help us to realise the message that the Lord Buddha delivered to mankind so many hundreds of years ago and may we each one of us endeavour to translate that message in our lives, whether we call ourselves Hindus or not."

—MAHATMA GANDHI— *from a speech delivered on the occasion of the Buddha Jayanti celebrations at Calcutta in 1925.*

\* \* \* \* \*



" THE BUDDHA story attracted me even in early boyhood and I was drawn to the young Siddhartha who, after many inner struggles and pain and torment, was to develop into the Buddha. Edwin Arnold's 'Light of Asia' became one of my favourite books. In later years when I travelled about a great deal in my province, I liked to visit the many places connected with the Buddha legend, sometimes making a detour for the purpose. Most of these places lie in my province or not far from it. Here (on the Nepal frontier) Buddha was born, here he wandered, here (at Gaya in Bihar) he sat under the Bodhi tree and gained enlightenment, here he preached his first sermon, here he died . . . .

" The conception of the Buddha, to which innumerable loving hands have given shape in carved stone and marble and bronze, seems to symbolize the whole spirit of Indian thought, or at least one vital aspect of it. Seated on the lotus flower, calm and impassive, above passion and desire, beyond the storm and strife of this world, so far away he seems, out of reach, unattainable. Yet again we look and behind those still, unmoving features there is a passion and an emotion, strange and more powerful than the passions and emotions we have known. His eyes are closed, but some power of the spirit looks out of them and a vital energy fills the frame. The ages roll by and Buddha seems not so far away after all ; his voice whispers in our ears and tells us not to run away from the struggle but, calm-eyed, to face it, and to see in life ever greater opportunities for growth and advancement.

" Personality counts to-day as ever, and a person who has impressed himself on the thought of mankind as Buddha has, so that even to-day there is something living and vibrant about the thought of him, must have been a wonderful man—a man who was, as Barth says, the ' finished model of calm and sweet majesty, of infinite tenderness for all that breathes and compassion for all that suffers, of perfect moral freedom and exemption from every prejudice. And the nation and the race which can produce such a magnificent type must have deep reserves of wisdom and inner strength.

" Buddha had the courage to attack popular religion, superstition, ceremonial and priestcraft, and all the vested interests that clung to them. He condemned also the metaphysical and theological outlook, miracles, revelations and dealings with the supernatural. His appeal was to logic, reason and experience ; his emphasis was on ethics, and his method was one of psychological analysis, a psychology without a soul. His whole approach comes like the breath of the fresh wind from the mountains after the stale air of metaphysical speculation.

" Buddhism, child of Indian thought, had its nationalist background also. India was to it the holy land where Buddha had lived and preached and died, where famous scholars and saints had spread the faith. But Buddhism was essentially international, a world





religion, and as it developed and spread, it became increasingly so. Thus it was natural for the old Brahminic faith to become the symbol, again and again, of nationalist revivals."

—JAWAHARLAL NEHRU in *Discovery of India*.

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"The fundamental teaching of Gautama, as it is now being made plain to us by the study of original sources, is clear and simple and in the closest harmony with modern ideas. It is beyond all dispute the achievement of one of the most penetrating intelligences the world has ever known."

—H. G. WELLS in *Outline of History*.

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"Buddhism has been a great civilising power in the Far East for nearly twenty-five centuries shaping the mind of Asia . . . ."

S. RADHAKRISHNAN in *East and West : Some Reflections*.

The views expressed in this monograph are the authors' own views and they do not necessarily represent the views of the Government of Madras.

—Director of Information and Publicity.







## Special Articles

### WHAT AND HOW THE BUDDHA TAUGHT

By A. Aliyappan, Superintendent, Madras Museum.

#### The Buddha Age

The outlines of the story of Gautama Buddha are so well known that they need not be repeated here. According to the sacred books of the Buddhists, Gautama was the sixth of the succession of the Buddhas. All great men are products of the social and cultural environments of their time. It will therefore be of interest to get an idea of the social and cultural situation of India about the time of Gautama whose date of birth according to the Sinhalese Buddhists was 624 B.C.

Northern Bihar and the *terai* regions of the Himalayas, the homeland of the Buddha, were divided into a number of tribal republics which elected their own chieftains. By about the 7th century B.C., these tiny republican states had developed into petty monarchies. The important kingdoms then were, Magadha, Kosala and Vatsa and minor kingdoms were Kuru, Panchala, Mithila, Kasi, Anga, Kalinga, Asmaka, Kamboja and Mathura. Panini in his grammar refers to two classes of states, the republics called *Sangha* or *Gana*, and territories ruled by kings to which the term *Janapada* is applied.

Kosala was a powerful state and it seems to have extended its power over the Sakyas of Kapilavastu. King Prasenajit of Kosala, a contemporary of the Buddha and a rival of king Ajatasatru of Magadha finds prominent mention in Buddhist legends. Though Prasenajit did not become a convert to Buddhism, he was a great admirer of the Buddha. He was also on friendly terms with the Brahmanas and the Jainas.

The Vatsa country with its capital at Kausambi, on the right bank of the Jumna, had its famous king Udayana, the hero of three Sanskrit dramas, *Swapnavasavadatta* of Bhasa, *Priyadarshika* and *Ratnavali* of Harsha. Udayana, though not at first favourably disposed towards Buddhism and is said to have tortured the monk, Pindola, was converted to Buddhism by the very same Pindola. Udayana's son and successor was named Bodhi.

The capital of the Surasenas was at Mathura. Avantiputra, the king of the Surasenas, was the first amongst the royal disciples of the Buddha, through whose help Buddhism got established in the Mathura region. The Vrishnis and the Andhakas, both republican Sanghas of the Mathura region are found mentioned in Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. Krishna (Vasudeva) of the Vrishni tribe is described as a *Sangha-mukhya*.



The rise of the Magadhan imperialism under the leadership of Bimbisara, Ajatasatru and others was at the expense of the republican states mentioned above. The example of Magadha was followed in other areas and led to the extinction of the republican Sanghas all over Northern India. Though himself the son of a king, Prince Siddhartha obviously had personal contacts with the republican tradition and ideals prevalent in the territories known to him.

The republics mentioned above should not be understood as having been democracies. The small states, though tributary to the great kingdoms, had considerable local autonomy, and a larger number of persons, all heads of households, had a say in the Government and met regularly in assembly halls (*santhagara*) to discuss tribal politics. The executive-in-chief held office for life and often seems to have passed on the office to his heir. The Buddhist Sangha (church) was organised on the republican pattern with which Buddha was familiar. The monasteries were managed by a general body of the monks and major decisions had to be unanimous. It is interesting in this connection to note that several of the high offices in Buddhist monasteries were elective.

Both Jainism and Buddhism are believed to have arisen as revolts against the authority of the Brahmanas in religious and social life. Though caste had not become as rigid as it did later on, Buddhist literature has abundant echoes of caste pride. The phenomenon of Kshatriyas establishing new types of religious and social order is a unique matter which cannot be explained in any other way than as a symptom of a social revolution. The rise of the Nandas (of Sudra origin) as builders of an empire over the ruins of the Kshatriya kingdom of Magadha is also an event of the same order. Only a revolutionary age could produce Sudra emperors. At a time when society was in such a flux, the Buddhist Sangha (order of monks) opened its doors to Sudras and even to courtesans, the most famous of whom was Ambapali (*Skt.* Amrapali) of Vaisali, the Mary Magdalene of Buddhism. A poem attributed to her in the collection of songs known as *Therigathas* is a charming piece of lyrical literature.

The period when the Buddha lived was noted for new religious experiments. There were the Brahmanas divided mainly into two groups, those devoted to the performance of Vedic rituals and those that became *parivrajakas* devoting themselves to *tapas* and unruffled *samadhi* with a view to be rid themselves of the great suffering of birth and death (*samsara*). There were also other religious groups like the *Jatilas*, probably wandering ascetics with *jatas*, and *Ajivikas* who lived in caves. There was also Jainism of the Tirthankaras. In their hermitages, Hindu philosophers were at this time engaged in thinking out the philosophy of the Upanishads.





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### **Reasoned Humanism of the Buddha.**

The age which produced the Buddha was an age of intellectual unrest. It was the age also of Confucius, Mahavira and Pythagoras. Politically also, as we have seen, it was an age of wider contacts, expansion and adventure. The Buddha's was the greatest spiritual adventure of his times. The happy young prince of the Sakyas was an intensely humane person. This is the impression that one never fails to get while going through the great mass of Buddhist literature. The story of his nursing a sick monk who had been deserted by all his companions and the story of his accepting the invitation to a meal from the courtesan, Ambapali, in preference to the invitations from bigger men of the city are incidents which explain this trait of his character. Personal salvation was only a part of the objectives which he wanted his followers to aim at. They were to go forth for the peace and well-being and happiness of the whole world (*bahu jana sukhaya ; bahu jana hitaya*). The essential pre-condition of general well-being is the development of the ethical nature of man through the practice of personal discipline, reduction of selfishness and greed and cravings. A broad-based socialisation of religion at a level at which popular participation will be maximised seems to have been the aim of Prince Siddhartha when he launched his great mission of compassion (*karuna*) and reasoned wisdom (*prajna*).

Every great prophet has been an innovator. Though he builds on the social and cultural patterns which he inherits from the existing tradition, at some points or other, he is compelled to break with the past. The Buddha too broke with the past when he said that the sacrificial fire which the priest lights on altars should be really lit in the heart. He also broke with the past when he declared that rewards cannot be got by chanting hymns and prayers, but only by good works and personal efforts. He tried to raise the moral tone of the people by declaring that the evil results of bad acts cannot be wiped off by expiatory rites. Though rituals have a place in religion and, if well understood, they are a means of emphasizing facets of religious truths, they have an unfortunate tendency to become ends in themselves. In Buddha's time, rituals had overgrown and there was need to stop the rot. The meaning of Vedic sacrifices is too eroteric to be understood by the ordinary man and performing such sacrifices mechanically in the hope of winning merit was a tragic degeneration.

The dependence on the authority of the written Word and scriptures in the place of the light of reason and experience was also an Indian attitude which the Buddha wanted to change.

His questioning the authority of the Vedas and his stand against fire sacrifices and animal sacrifices have been misunderstood as opposition to Brahmins and as an attempt



to dethrone them from the high position they occupied in society. That this was not the Buddha's idea would be clear to any one who reads the *Dhammapada* chapter on the Brahmin and the high regard in which the true Brahmana was held (not, of course, the Brahmin who claimed honours "because of his origin or his mother"). Some centuries later, during the time of Asoka, we find the same attitude of respect to the *Brahmana* reflected in the edicts of the great Emperor.

### Early Buddhism rooted in Hinduism.

Early Buddhism arose within Brahminism minus its "externals in rituals and its relative want of attention to the religious importance of conduct", and agreed with its central tenets regarding the Absolute and Yoga. The symbolism of early religious art of Buddhism, including the Bodhi tree, the wheel of Dharma, the Pillar of Fire, etc. are derived from well-known *upanishadic* symbols, and give concrete evidence of the agreement in basic notions. The position has been summarised by Mrs. Rhys Davids in the following passage :

"We mean, Buddhism started in agreement with the central religious tenets or principles of the Immanence in Brahmanism of that day. Next, that in drifting apart from Brahmanism, Buddhism, in not attaching importance to ritual and on attaching importance to the religious sanction of conduct, did so without any crisis arising such as we look for in schisms or ruptures. Next, that while drifting apart in this twofold way (ritual and conduct) it was inevitable that there should be dragged in 'a drifting apart' also in the central teaching of Immanence. In this way the lofty meaning of 'self' or spirit suffered in Buddhism the same worsening, though in a different way, which it has suffered in our days in Europe. For us, self means usually our worse self; for India self meant, means our best self; for Buddhism it came to mean something that was non-existent. This, the third and greatest phase in the breach in relations, was aided in two ways from non-Brahmanical movements; (i) the study of mind-ways as apart from the man; (ii) the growth of monasticism, in which the standard of manhood was lowered to mean, not something capable of becoming godhead, but something it was better to end. Finally I hold, that the exile from its parent stem should come more into account than it does when the causes of the decay of Buddhism in its native land are sought."\*

### The Essence of the Buddha's Teaching.

In simple terms, the teaching of the Buddha is—

1. Strive to purify your hearts of lust and passions.

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\* Indian Historical Quarterly, X, 1934.



2. Strive to purify your thoughts and words and actions of all that is harmful to yourself and others.

Now you are ready to begin the effort to destroy *Aviḍya* (ignorance) by understanding what has a beginning has an end.

3. Life and suffering are indivisible. Life begins in suffering, is lived in suffering, comes to a close in suffering and ends in suffering. Though we may enjoy fleeting happiness, none of us can avoid the suffering which is innate in our being.
4. Desire is the root of suffering. Nine-tenths (and in a higher sense ten-tenths) of our suffering comes from desire for some things we have not, or from aversion to (desire to be rid of) some things we have.
5. Suffering can only be eliminated by the elimination of desire. Why? Everything that happens in this Universe happens strictly according to Law. The working of this Law is strictly based upon the process of cause and effect. Whatever is the result of some things else pre-existent and co-existent, it is also the cause of some things else. No logically thinking man can doubt it. This being so, evil follows evil, and good follows good as the cart follows the horse. When desire, the great motive power of all human action, ceases, action ceases; chains of causation are broken. No evil is done. No evil results. Suffering is evil, and evil is suffering. Therefore, suffering is at an end.
6. If the preliminary stages (the practice of purity and kindness) have been attained, the next step is constant watchfulness and control over the mind. Left to itself, the mind jumps like a monkey from tree to tree, from idea to idea. With immense effort and patience, it can be controlled, first to the point of thinking only as directed, and later to the point of transcending the ordinary processes of thought. This practice is called concentration and meditation—*Dhyana* in Sanskrit, *Chan* in Chinese, *Zen* in Japanese. When the ordinary processes of human thought are transcended, a light begins to drive the darkness of ignorance from the mind. The world is seen almost as it really is, a conglomeration of ever-shifting particles, combining in myriad forms, separating as the forms disintegrate, recombining into new and equally transitory forms, endlessly and endlessly. No one of these forms remains the same for a single point in time; all is flux; being is either growth or decay; and growth implies decay.
7. Then, with persistence, comes a realization of the unity of all. The particles are seen to be not really particles, not having separate entities, but related to the



whole as every drop of sea water is related to the ocean. Even the scientists without such deep mental penetration, can tell us that. No advanced scientist now talks of elements, whether of four or of ninety odd. They know the matter is formed of one substance, that may become energy and energy matter. "The stuff of the world is mind-stuff" But they know this only intellectually; they have not had an inner experience, an inner realisation, supramundane vision of its truth, which is an aspect of the highest truth of all. The persistent searcher gains all this and more, from which he learns that he is *everything* and *nothing*. *Nothing* because no entity, even an age-old star, exists for more than a moment in eternity; *everything*, because he is eternity. He and *It* are one.

And when he returns from his vision to his transitory self he is cleansed of desire. He knows that all life is one. I am you, and you are he and she and it and they. Can I desire what is yours, when it is equally my own? Can I long to be rich, when I am all the riches of world? Can I hate or envy another, knowing that he is my very self?

### The Appeal of Buddhism to the Modern Mind.

Early uncontaminated Buddhism appeals to the present generation, because the way in which the Buddha approached and analysed problems anticipated the scientific way of the present day. The Buddha's arguments are simple and well illustrated. He always used the method of simple questions and answers and, instead of himself answering a question, made the interrogator find the answer. As Christ did later, the Buddha used parables to explain his points and some of those stories have become world famous. The Buddha was probably well-informed on the many problems of the day, for we find him, for instance, on one occasion, comparing the caste situation of India with the two-class society of the Yavanas who knew of only two castes, master and slave, but the slave there could become a master. Buddhism is said to be pessimistic because of the great emphasis it laid on the miseries and tragedies of life, but reading about the Buddha or looking at the sculptures and paintings inspired by Buddhism, one does not get any impression of pessimism. On the other hand, we get an impression of restrained happiness in the gifts of life. The Buddha's advice of self-reliance in spiritual matters, his advice against accepting any authority without questioning its credentials, the simplicity of his spiritual exercises, etc., have, in them a refreshingly modern quality.

The Buddha's approach was practical, non-speculative and direct, so practical that some consider it almost un-Indian. Since Indians, as a nation, are not regarded by themselves as so forthright, it has been suggested that his Indo-Mongoloid ancestry might explain





his departure from the Indian stereotype. This is too crude a way of explaining the genius of the Buddha. The unique individuals of a nation need not have all the national traits; the Indian nation *does* have practical men in addition to philosophers. Moreover, no one has established that the Buddha had the physical characters of the Mongoloid. He belonged to the Kshatriya clan, and emphasised the Aryan qualities of his way. If the record of the story of his austerities is to be relied upon, Buddha had body hair which came off, due to emaciation, when he rubbed his body during the days of his *tapas*, when he tried to live on one grain of rice a day. Such body hair is *not* characteristic of Mongoloids. This is however a point which has very little relevance to the subject of the personality of the Buddha and is touched upon here, as we are all naturally curious about his physical appearance.

### **Buddhism became a Missionary Faith.**

We are not aware of any organised efforts made by Hindus to convert others to their religion. Rites intended to admit *Vratyas* into the fold are mentioned, but they were far removed from missionary work. The Buddha, however, asked his monks to go forth to propagate his way, out of compassion for the world. The early accounts of the numbers of people converted by the various leading *Theras* remind us of the reports of Christian missionaries to their home boards in U. S. A. or England. Dharmarakshita, a Greek monk, is said to have converted 37,000 people in Aparanta (the west). The mission headed by Asoka's son and daughter which went to Ceylon need not be a fiction at all. Asoka has recorded that he sent Dharmadutas to various countries to "elevate the people by a growth in piety" which was a constant concern of Asoka, as it was of the Buddha.

Propagation of religion as a function of the State was an Asokan innovation which did not survive in the Asokan style in India of later days, but the ideal of kings as upholders of Dharma (Hindu Dharma, made rigid) continued in India.

### **Monasteries.**

In an expansive age, when social conscience was low, a band of dedicated celibates who would combine the practice of religious discipline with social service and teaching was an essential need. The Bhikkus when admitted into the Sangha by a simple ceremony required some places to stay during the rainy season. The monasteries (*Viharas*) for which Buddhism became famous later on, had, thus, a very simple origin. They were, to begin with, simple groups of buildings, but later became imposing and large structures, as the monks increased in numbers and monasteries had more patronage.



In selecting the first *vihāra* site at Venuvana, King Bimbisara wanted it " not too far from the town and not too near, suitable for going and coming, easily accessible for all people, by day not too crowded, by night not exposed to noise and alarm, clean of the smell of people, hidden from men, well fitted for a retired life ".

#### Against Vague Speculation.

The Hindus are too fond of metaphysics. They were so even in the 6th century B.C. To metaphysical enquirers the Buddha said :

" Of what use are these questions ! How do they make a man more moral !  
How do they help a man to gain salvation (Nirvana) ? "

In the parable of the man wounded by an arrow he explains it further :

" A man is hit by a poisoned arrow. His friends hasten to the doctor. The latter is about to draw the arrow out of the wound. The wounded man however, cries : " Stop : I will not have the arrow drawn out until I know who shot it, whether a warrior, a Brahmana, a Vaisya or a Sudra, to which family he belonged, whether he was tall or short, of what species and description the arrow was " and so on. What would happen ! The man would die before all these questions are answered. In the same way the disciple who wished for answers to a'l his questions about the beyond and so on would die before he knew the truth about suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering and the way to the cessation of suffering."

#### THE MIDDLE PATH.

Buddha was the apostle of moderation. In speaking about mortification of the body indulged in by ascetics, which he also practiced in his youth, he said :

" With all this rigorous mortification, I came no jot nearer to the rich supernatural felicity of clearness of knowledge."

#### WHO IS A BRAHMANA !

This question is answered by the Buddha in the *Dhammapada* :

" He who is thoughtful, blameless, settled, dutiful, without passions, and who has attained the highest end, him I call indeed a Brahmana . . . . .

Him I call a Brahmana who does not offend by body word or thought, and is controlled on these three points.



A man does not become a Brahmana by his plaited hair, by his family or by birth; in whom there is truth and righteousness, he is blessed, he is a Brahmana.

What is the use of plaited hair, O fool! What of the raiment of goat-skins! Within thee there is ravening, but the outside thou makest clean.

I do not call a man a Brahmana because of his origin or of his mother. He is indeed arrogant and he is wealthy. But the poor who is free from all attachments, him I call indeed a Brahmana."

#### THE BUDDHA ON WOMEN.

Ananda asks the Master :

"What is the reason, Lord, what is the cause for which women do not eat in the public assembly, pursue no business and do not earn their livelihood by some (independent) profession ?"

Buddha replies thereto :

"Choleric, Ananda, is womankind; jealous, Ananda, is womankind; envious, Ananda, is womankind; stupid, Ananda, is womankind. That is Ananda, the reason."

#### ON CASTEISM.

The Buddha did not recognise the validity of the view of superiority or inferiority on account of caste. The order of monks had men and women of all castes: Upali was a barber; Sati belonged to the fisher-folk; Nanda was a cowherd. If the Buddha's teaching had taken root in India her history would have been different.

The Buddha was aware of countries having only mobile economic classes, for which see the following extract :

Buddha says to Assalayana :

"Have you heard this: that in the Yona Kamboja and other border countries, there are only two social classes, Arya (master) and Dasa (servant); that an Arya may become Dasa and Dasa may become Arya ?"

#### ON THINKING FOR ONESELF.

Do not accept what you hear by report.

Do not accept tradition.

Do not accept a statement because it is found in our books nor because it is in accord with your belief, nor because it is the saying of your teacher.

—*Anguttara Nikaya.*



#### ON EATING MEAT.

An important person, General Siha, who was a Jaina by religion came to the Buddha and became a lay disciple. General Siha one day invited the Buddha and several monks to a meal with him and the Lord accepted the invitation. The General had a sumptuous, soft and nice meal with meat prepared and the Buddha and the monks enjoyed the food.

The Jainas who were always critical of the Buddha began to shout from cross-road to cross-road that a fat beast had been specially killed by Siha for the recluse Gotama and that he had eaten the meat knowing that it had been killed for him. General Siha heard this cry but ignored it.

With reference to this incident the Buddha told his monks :

" Monks, you should not knowingly make use of meat killed on purpose for you. I allow you fish and meat that are quite pure in these three respects : if they have not been seen, heard or suspected to have been killed on purpose for you."

#### NIRVANA.

The word *Nirvana* means " blown out ". The fuel that feeds desires is exhausted and " want " goes out. It is an ethical experience because it follows freedom from passion and other faults. It is an experience in gnosis because of the liberation from *Avidya* (ignorance, not of factual information, but of the Truth). It is an experience of peace and joy. What is " blown out " is the lower, changing, compounded self.

" The stopping of becoming, is Nirvana "

—*Samyutta Nikaya*.

" It is called Nirvana because of the getting rid of craving "

—*Samyutta Nikaya*.

#### ON THOUGHT.

" All that we are is the result of what we have thought ; it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage.

All that we are is the result of what we have thought : it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man acts or speaks with a pure thought happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him."

#### ON EARNESTNESS.

" Earnestness is the path of immortality (*Nirvana*), thoughtlessness, the path of death. Those who are in earnest do not die, those who are thoughtless are as if dead already."





ON GOODNESS.

"The scent of flowers does not travel against the wind nor (that of) sandal-wood or of Tagara and Mallika flowers ; but the odour of good people travels even against the wind ; a good man pervades every place."

ON CRAVING.

"The Bhikku who abstains from sensual pleasures—O Metteyya, who is free from desire, always thoughtful, happy by reflection, he is without commotions ; he after knowing both ends does not stick in the middle, as far as his understanding is concerned ; he has overcome desire in this world."

ON MISSIONARY WORK.

"I, monks, am freed from all snares, both those of *devas*, and those of men. And you, monks, are freed from all snares, both those of *devas* and those of men. Walk, monks, on tour for the blessing of the many folk, for the happiness of the many folk, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, the blessing, the happiness of *devas* and men. Let not two of you go by the same way. Monks, teach Dhamma that is lovely at the beginning, lovely in the middle and lovely at the ending. Explain with the spirit and the letter the Brahma-faring completely fulfilled and utterly pure. There are beings with little dust in their eyes who, not hearing Dhamma, are decaying but if they are learners of Dhamma they will grow. And I, monks, will go along to Uruvela, the camp township in order to teach Dhamma."

ON FAITH.

"By faith you shall be free and go beyond the realm of death.  
Faith is the wealth here best for man—by faith the flood is crossed.  
By faith the flood is crossed.  
By diligence the sea.  
By vigour ill is passed.  
By wisdom cleansed is he."

ON WISDOM.

"As, monks, the lion, king of beasts, is reckoned chief among animals for his strength, speed and bravery, so is the faculty of wisdom reckoned chief among mental states helpful to enlightenment for its enlightenment. And what are the mental states helpful to enlightenment. The faculty of faith, of vigour, of mindfulness, of concentration, of wisdom, each conduces to enlightenment."



Material shape and the other Khandas are impermanent : what is impermanent is suffering, what is suffering is not self ; what is not self—this is not mine, this am I not, this is not myself. This should be seen by means of right wisdom as it really is."

#### ON IGNORANCE.

I see no other single hindrance such as this hindrance of ignorance, obstructed by which mankind for a long long time runs on and circles on.

### GREAT PERSONALITIES OF BUDDHISM.

By Dr. A. Aiyappan, P. R. Srinivasan and Kumari R. Vanaja.

#### INDIA

SARIPUTTA (Sariputra) was one of the chief disciples of the Buddha. It is a remarkable thing to note that he understood the Dharma of the Buddha when he heard it at second hand from the monk Assaji. He was proficient in the Vinayas. He was the first of the disciples of the Buddha who was permitted to ordain others, because the Buddha asked him to ordain Rahula. He predeceased the Buddha and his relics were deposited in several stupas. One of the stupas of Sanchi dating from the 2nd century B.C. contained his relics.

MOGGALLANA was, like Sariputta, one of the chief disciples of the Buddha. Both of them were ripe enough to become *arhats* on hearing the doctrine of the Buddha at second hand.

ANANDA was a cousin of the Buddha. He became a disciple of the Buddha after some vacillation. He was the Buddha's personal attendant during the last twenty-five years of the Buddha's life. During the last days of the Buddha it was to Ananda that he gave the famous advice, "Therefore Ananda, be ye your own lights! Be your own refuge! Hold steadfastly to the religion as your light, hold steadfastly to the religion as your refuge!" Ananda was so attached to the Buddha, that he did not become an *arhat* till after his Nirvana. He was responsible for admitting women into the order.

BIMBISARA, the king of Magadha was the first king met by the Buddha after his enlightenment. He was always interested in the welfare of the Sangha. He placed the pleasure-garden at Rajagriha at the disposal of the Buddha. He directed that nobody should cause any harm to the followers of the Buddha. He advised the Buddha to hold religious assemblies on the 8th, 14th and 15th day of each month.

JIVAKA was the court physician of Bimbisara and was deputed by the emperor to attend on the Buddha, as he was the leading physician of the day. Jivaka was the son of



a courtesan of Rajagriha, who was thrown away as a baby on a dust heap from which Bimbisara's son Abhaya rescued him. Jivaka was reared at the court and sent to Taxila for his medical education. He treated several royal patients very successfully both as a surgeon and as a physician. Among his patients were King Bimbisara of Magadha and King Pradyota of Ujjain. Several stories of his wonderful cures are recorded in the Vinaya texts.

TISSA MOGGALIPUTTA, the learned monk, 236 years after the death of Buddha, convened an assembly of a thousand monks in the city of Pataliputra (Patna), with the object of compiling the texts of the true religion (the *Theravada*). The session was held for nine months. Tissa belonged to the school of *Vibhajjavādins*. According to tradition, he compiled the *Kathavatthu*, a book refuting all the heretical doctrines of those times and added it to the Canon. The chroniclers of Ceylon relate that he sent out missionaries to the north and south and prepared the way for the propagation of the religion in foreign lands.

MAHINDA (MAHENDRA) was the younger brother or son of Asoka. He is said to have been the pupil of Tissa, the president of the Third Buddhist Council of Pataliputra. The legends of Ceylon says that Mahinda with Buddhist monks flew to Ceylon. But there is no doubt that it was Mahinda, who introduced Buddhism into Ceylon. He might have also taken with him the texts of the Canon. When he visited Ceylon, the King Devanampiya Tissa was the ruler of the Island. It was also then that the first Buddhist religious buildings were erected in the capital at Anuradhapura. The *Dipavamsa* and the *Mahavamsa*, the two chronicles of Ceylon have long narratives regarding his visit. Sanghamitra his sister also went to Ceylon. She took with her a branch of the Bodhi tree, from Bodhi-Gaya which was planted at Anuradhapura.

ASOKA, THE GREAT (B.C. 273—236 B.C.) whom H. G. Wells describes as "Greatest of Kings", was also the greatest royal patron of Buddhism. He inherited from his father Bindusara a vast empire extending from Persia to the Bay of Bengal, to which he added Kalinga after a bloody war. Following the practice of Achaemenian Emperors like Darius I, he was the first Indian monarch to issue edicts to publicise his views on religion, ethics and other matters of general interest. These were indeed white papers carved on rock, and have been of great use, especially to historians of Buddhism.

Asoka's edicts give us very little information about his early life. Buddhist texts like the *Divyavadana* and the Sinhalese Chronicles depict him as a blood-thirsty young man who seized the throne after a fratricidal war in which he killed ninety-nine of his brothers. Historians are inclined to regard the Buddhist story as a concoction to exaggerate the significance and power of Buddhism to turn men from evil. In two of his rock edicts Asoka himself tells his subjects of his concern for his brothers, sisters and other relatives and it is safer for us to believe Asoka than the legendary stories that grew up later on around his personality.



In the edicts he uses the titles *Devanampiya* and *Piyadasi* which were conventional epithets used by other kings before and after him. In contrast to the flamboyant titles used by most Indian kings, the great emperor referred to himself only as *rāja*.

In conformity with the practice of the times, it is surmised that Asoka had several queens. The first queen was *Sakya Kumari*, mother of Asoka's eldest son Mahendra and eldest daughter Sanghamitra. Queen *Sakya Kumari* was the daughter of a merchant of *Vedisagiri* and was married to Asoka when he was Viceroy at Ujjain. She belonged to the clan of the Buddha and was a devout Buddhist. It was probably due to her influence that the stupas at Sanchi and Bhilsa were built. *Padmavati*, mother of Prince Kunala, *Karuvaki*, mother of *Tivala*, *Asandhimitra* and *Tishyarakshita* are the names of other queens.

The pacifism which he accepted as his policy after the Kalinga war was not due to any lack of martial skill. As a prince, he served as his father's Viceroy at Ujjain and at Taxila and had several conquests and aggressive wars to his credit. The standing army of the Mauryan kings numbered several hundreds of thousands. The havoc caused by the Mauryan army during the Kalinga war was terrific. The Rock Edict XIII gives the number of the Kalingas killed as over 100,000. Many times this number died as a consequence of the ravages of war. It was shortly after the Kalinga war that Asoka was converted to Buddhism by the venerable monk, Upagupta.

In the Shahbazgarhi edict (which historians believe must have been drafted under Asoka's personal supervision) the remorse felt by the royal convert to Buddhism is expressed in very moving terms :—

"When the King, of Gracious Mien and Beloved of the Gods, had been consecrated eight years Kalinga was conquered. 150,000 people were thence taken captive, 100,000 were killed, and many more died. Just after the taking of Kalinga the Beloved of the Gods began to follow Righteousness, to love Righteousness, to give instruction in Righteousness. When an unconquered country is conquered, people are killed, they die, or are made captive. That the Beloved of the Gods finds very pitiful and grievous. Today, if a hundredth or a thousandth part of those who suffered in Kalinga were to be killed, to die, or to be taken captive, it would be very grievous to the Beloved of the Gods. If any one does him wrong it will be forgiven as far as it can be forgiven. The Beloved of the Gods even reasons with the forest tribes in his empire, and seeks to reform them. But the Beloved of the Gods is not only compassionate, he is also powerful and he tells them to repent, lest they be slain. For the Beloved of the Gods desires safety, self-control, justice and happiness for all beings. The Beloved of the Gods considers that the greatest of all victories is the victory of Righteousness, and that (victory) the Beloved of the Gods has already won, here and on all his borders, even





600 leagues away in the realm of the Greek King Antiyoka, and beyond Antiyoka among the four kings Turamaya, Antikini, Maga and Alikasudara, and in the South among the Cholas and Pandyas and as far as Ceylon."

*Dharma-Vijay*—moral conquest—became his chief concern and never afterwards in his life did he wage a war.

In his commending the *dharma* to the tribesmen of the north-western frontier of India, he, however, warns the tribes if they did not drop their criminal ways, the Emperor, even in his remorse, is mighty and would punish them.

Asoka was more attracted by the ethical than the philosophical aspects of Buddhism and it was the ethics of Buddhism which he tried to propagate. Buddhism gave him new concepts of his kingly duties, to regard all men as his children, to regard the welfare of the whole world as his duty, to conduct public business promptly, to establish peace and welfare. He asked all his officials to undertake tours with the same end in view. Officers entitled *Dharma-mahamatras* were appointed to promote the happiness of those devoted to Dharma, whether they were Buddhists, Brahmanas or Ajivikas. He exhorted discipline at home, respect of teachers, kindness to all including animals. To give effective medical aid to men and animals, he asked his officials to grow medicinal plants in all parts of his dominions. He established Nagavanas (elephant preserves) to breed elephants. Among his irrigation projects was the great Sudarsana reservoir near Junagarh. Asoka probably had also a seagoing fleet of ships for overseas trade.

Asoka sent his *Dutas* (envoys) to foreign countries such as Syria, Egypt, Macedonia, Cyrene, Corinth, Burma and Ceylon to propagate the message of the Buddha. We have no knowledge of the effects produced by these Asokan missions to the West but we do know that Buddhism was well-known in Alexandria.

Asoka tried to establish inter-group harmony among the different sections (1) by emphasising their common ground at root (*mula*), (2) by asking for restraint in the criticism of other sects (*vachaguti*), (3) by encouraging followers of different sects to meet together (*samavaya*), (4) by asking people to become *bahusruta* or proficient in the scriptures of different religions. In all these he himself set the example for others to follow. He gave up hunting, turned almost a vegetarian and went on long pilgrimages. Many animals which were not essential as a source of food or for service were declared protected (*avadhyas*).

Thus did Asoka silence the war drum (*dharmighosha*) and replaced it by the *dharma-ghosha*.



By Asoka's time schisms had developed in the Buddhist order and in some of his edicts, the Emperor severely warns creators of factions (*sanghabhittā*). By holding the third Buddhist Council, presided over by Moggaliputta Tissa, the emperor tried to resolve internal troubles in the Saṅgha.

Asoka is credited with having replaced wood by stone in the construction of monumental buildings. The palace which he built at Pataliputra was so grand that legends grew up about its having been made by divine architects.

According to the accounts in the *Mahāvamsa*, Asoka caused 84,000 stupas to be built in his empire, a few by himself and the rest by his subordinate rulers. He is said to have opened seven of the eight original stupas which contained the relics of the Buddha and redistributed them to be enshrined in the numerous new stupas. Amaravati and Bhattiprolu in Guntur are believed to have got the relics of the Buddha at this time. The smaller original stupa at Sanchi was built at the time of Asoka, but was destroyed probably by Pushyamitra but rebuilt and enlarged by Agnimitra encasing the remnants of the Asokan stupa. What did Asoka achieve by these stupas? The stupas were not new to India or to Buddhists. From very early prehistoric times, memorials in the form of earth or rubble mounds surrounded by wooden fencing were built over the mortal remains of celebrated persons. Asoka is believed by some scholars to have popularised them by his effective propagation.

Sir John Marshall thinks that the Emperor Asoka initiated stupa worship among the Buddhists and that this was part of his policy "to adapt Buddhism by every means in his power to the needs of his empire". To ensure the unity of the State Church he held the Council of Pataliputra. Marshall even goes further to suggest that Asoka planned to cast the net of Buddhism wider among all races and classes of society and Buddha worship was the result. We doubt if stupa worship was Asoka's political invention. It must have had deeper traditional roots. Buddha worship also must have been a natural development requiring very little plan or imperial design. Again Marshall, somewhat cynically, observe that neither the emperor's ordinances nor his precepts nor his lavish benefactions and foundations, nor his missionary activities, nor his indefatigable zeal and example was destined to have such a revolutionary effect upon Buddhism as the one act by which he gave a portion of the relics of the Buddha to every town of importance in his realm and ordered the erection of stupas fit for their reception.

Barabar group of caves (Lomas Rishi and Sudama) built for Ajivikas by Asoka and his successors are the earliest of the large number of shrines and monasteries of this class, most of them excavated later under Buddhist inspiration. The Mauryan polish is still visible in these Barabar caves. The Ajivikas were a Jaina-like sect which arose along with Buddhism and Jainism.



Asoka is said to have erected more than thirty majestic monolithic columns with animal capitals, of which eight have survived, some only in parts. The shafts of these columns are about 30 feet in height and about 50 tons in weight. The capitals are in three parts, the Persepolitan "bell", the abacus, and the crowning piece or sculpture in the round. The most beautiful part is the floral bell. The material is the greyish white Chunar sand stone. The proto-type of these columns was Achaemenian but the workers may have been Indians inspired by western masters. The metallic "Mauryan" polish of these columns makes the stone like polished metal. In aesthetic effect these columns have not been surpassed.

KANISHKA may be regarded as the Constantine of Buddhism. The date of his conversion to Buddhism is not known. He became a Buddhist, quite early in his reign. He showed the zeal of a convert and became a great patron of Buddhism.

The fourth Buddhist Council was summoned by Kanishka probably in A.D. 100 in the Kundalavana monastery near Kashmir, in order to fix the Canon. About 500 persons including Vasumitra and Asvaghosha participated in the discussions of the Council and prepared the *Mahavibhasha* or the "great commentary" on the Tripitaka. Probably Kanishka might have organised missionary propaganda in Central Asia and China. He patronised Buddhist art and literature also. He built a stupa at Peshawar which enshrined the relics of the Buddha. He also issued coins with the figure of the Buddha on the obverse. Asvaghosha, Nagarjuna and Caraka were all his contemporaries.

ASVAGHOSHA was the court poet of Kanishka. He lived in the 1st-2nd centuries A.D. He is mentioned as a leader of Mahayanism. He was of Brahmana family of Saketa (Ayodhya). As a Buddhist he belonged to the Sarvastivada school of Hinayana, but laid great stress on Bhakti towards the Buddha. His mother was Suvarnakshi. According to Tibetan sources, he was a great musician and composed many pieces of music. He is the author of the famous *Buddhacarita* in Sanskrit. Fragments of his three dramas were discovered in Central Asia. One of the dramas was *Sariputraprakaranam*.

"NAGARJUNA who was a friend and contemporary of the Satavahana king, Yajnasri Gautamiputra (166-196 A.D.) was a Buddhist philosopher of towering personality. He created an age in the history of Buddhist philosophy and gave it a definite turn. He propounded the Madhyamika school of Buddhist philosophy, which is also known as Sunyavada. A greater dialectician than Nagarjuna, the world has never seen. His great philosophical work, the Madhyamika-karika or Madhyamika-sastra consists of 400 *karikas* in 27 chapters and is the groundwork of his philosophy. It is an epitome of the teachings contained in the Mahayana-sutras and displays rare insight into the science of logic and



unsurpassed flights of daring thought. This work alone is enough to show what a master mind Nagarjuna was and how he shines in solitary splendour among the intellectuals of this country, past and present.

"According to the biography of Nagarjuna translated into Chinese by Kumarajiva in about 405 A.D. Nagarjuna was born in South India in a Brahmana family. Hsuan-Tsang, however, states that he was born in South Kosala or the ancient province of Vidarbha (modern Berar). Nagarjuna studied the whole of the Tripitaka in 90 days, but was not satisfied. He received the Mahayana-sutra from a very old monk in the Himalayas, but spent most of his life at Sri Parvata or Sri Sailam in South India which he made into a centre for the propagation of Buddhism. The Tibetan accounts show that Nagarjuna lived at Nalanda also. Hsuan-Tsang speaks of 'the four suns which illumined the world. One of these was Nagarjuna, the other three being Asvaghosha, Kumaralabdha (Kumaralata) and Aryadeva. Indeed as a philosophical thinker, Nagarjuna has no match in the history of Indian philosophy. T. Waters rightly calls him 'one of the wonders and mysteries of later Buddhism'.

"About twenty treatises available in Chinese translations are generally ascribed to Nagarjuna. Of these, eighteen are mentioned by Bunyiu Nanjio in his Catalogue as Nagarjuna's compositions. A reference has already been made to the Madhyamika-karika or the Madhyamika-sastra as the principal work of Nagarjuna who himself wrote a commentary on it called the *Akulobhaya* "the Safe one". Mention may be made here of only one more treatise of Nagarjuna, which he wrote as a letter to his friend Yajnasri Gautamiputra. This treatise is known as the *Suhrillekha* or "Letter to a Friend". I-tsing tells us that at the time of his visit to India he saw children committing it to memory and adults making a life-long study of it. This treatise shows unmistakably that Nagarjuna was not a destructive thinker as he is generally supposed to be and morality plays an important role in his philosophy of Sunyata as in any other philosophical discipline."\*

ASANGA was the elder brother of Vasubandhu. He belonged to Taxila. He lived in the 5th century A.D. Both he and his brother worked for the growth of the Nalanda University. He was the founder of the Yogacara School. He introduced *Tantra* into Buddhism and wrote on this subject.

VASUBANDHU was of a Brahmana family of Kausika Gotra of Purushapura (Peshawar) in North-west India. He was the brother of Asanga. He probably lived in the 4th century A.D. and adhered originally to the Sarvastivada School. Only late in his life he became a Mahayanist at the instance of his brother Asanga. He was probably responsible for converting King Baladitya of the Gupta dynasty to Buddhism. The king erected a monastery at Nalanda where Asanga and Vasubandhu taught.

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\* 2,500 years of Buddhism, ed. by Prof. Bapat, pp. 220-22.





He wrote the *Abhidharmakosa* with his own brilliant commentary on it. This work has not come down in Sanskrit. Though it is Hinayana in outlook it is an authority for all schools of Buddhism. The *Paramartha-Saptati* is another work of his where the Sankhya doctrine is refuted. After becoming a Mahayanist he wrote a number of commentaries on the Mahayana-sutras and other Mahayana texts. His classical works are the *Vimsatika* and *Trimsatika*. His biographer Paramartha says, " . . . all those who study the Mahayana and the Hinayana in India and in all the frontier countries use the works of Vasubandhu as their text-books. There are no teachers of any other schools (of Buddhism) or of the heretical sects who, on hearing his name, will not become quite nervous and timid ". He died at Ayodhya at the age of eighty.

DINNAGA was according to Taranatha, a pupil of Vasubandhu. He lived in the 5th century A.D. He was a native of Kanchipuram in South India. He went to Nalanda where he became a great Pandit. His works were translated into Chinese in 557 and 559 A.D. He was the greatest and most independent thinker among the successors of Vasubandhu. He was the founder of Indian logic, and one of the foremost figures in the history of Indian philosophy. He is said to have written in all 100 books of which only one, the *Nyayapravesa*, has come down in Sanskrit. Others are known only through Tibetan translations.

CHANDRAKIRTI was, according to Taranatha, a very learned man. He wrote commentaries on some of the Madhyamika texts. He was also at Nalanda adorning the chair of *adhyaksha*, just before Dharmapala.

DHARMAPALA was the son of a high official of Kanchipuram. He became a Buddhist monk early in his life. He was the head of the Nalanda University and became one of the most famous *adhyakshas* of it. Bhartrihari was a contemporary of Dharmapala. He wrote a number of works, on Buddhist philosophy and grammar. He was the guru of Silabhadra who succeeded him to the headship of the University.

STHIRAMATI was a scholar at Nalanda. Hsuan-Tsang has recorded that he was the founder of a monastery at Valabhi. From the fact that in the Tibetan catalogue a number of books are ascribed to him, it may be presumed that he contributed much to the spread of Buddhism in Tibet. He lived about the beginning of the 6th century A.D.

SANTIDEVA was a great teacher at Nalanda. He wrote the three important books *Sutrasamuccaya*, *Sikshasamuccaya* and *Bodhicaryavatara*. He lived about the beginning of the 8th century A.D.

SANTARAKSHITA was well versed in philosophy and the Tantras. He went to Tibet at the invitation of its ruler. In 749 A.D. he and his co-teacher Padmasambhava built



a monastery called "Samye" on the model of the one at Odantapuri, and he became the first *adhyaksha* of this institution. He wrote *Tattvasangraha*, *Tattvasiddhi* and other works. He died in Tibet in 762 A.D. after serving the cause of religion for thirty years.

### Buddhist Teachers and Scholars of Tamil-Nad.

ILAM BODHIYAR was a Tamil poet of the Sangam age (1st or 2nd century A.D.). One of his verses is to be found in the *Narrinai*.

SANGAVARUNAR was a poet of the Sangam age.

SITTALAI SATTANAR was the author of the classical poem the *Manimekalai* (2nd century A.D.) of the Sangam age.

ARAVANA ADIGAL. The *Manimekalai* (2nd century A.D.), the Sangam work refers to him as a great poet who was responsible for the conversion of Manimekalai, the daughter of Kovalan. Aravana Adigal was the head of a Vihara in Puhar or Kaveripattinam. When Puhar was engulfed by sea, he went to Vanji, the Chera capital and then to Kanchi where he attained Nirvana.

SANGHAMITRA was a Tamil Bhikshu of the Cola country lived in the 4th century A.D. He went to Ceylon, converted the king to Mahayana (Vaitulya) and destroyed the Mahavihara which was a seat of Hinayana school. The Abhayagiri Vihara was enlarged as the seat of the Mahayana sect. Later he fell a victim of a plot, hatched by one of the king's wives who was of the Hinayana sect.

NADAGUTTA (4th century A.D.) wrote the *Kundalakesi* one of the five famous Kavyas in Tamil. He was the teacher of a Bhikshuni called Kundalakesi. Probably she is the same as the Vaisya girl Kundalakesi mentioned in the Kavya.

THERA BUDDHADATTA (5th century A.D.) of the Cola country was patronised by Kalabhra Acceyutavikkanta. He wrote the *Buddhavamsattagatha* and the *Abhidhammavatara*. He held charge successively of the monasteries at Kaveripattinam, Urappuram, Bhutamangulam and Kanchi.

BODHI DHARMA, a prince of Kanchi, was the founder of the Dhyana-marga. It was called "Chan" by the Chinese and "Zen" by the Japanese. He was called Tamo by the Chinese who erected temples for him. He lived in the early half of the sixth century A.D. He went to China about 520 A.D. and converted to Buddhism Emperor Wu-Ti of the Lyang dynasty which then reigned in Southern China. The Emperor became a monk for a time and made Bodhidharma the head of all the Buddhist monks in China. He took up his residence in a famous monastery near the present Kiu-Kiang on the Yang-Tze.

DINNAGA. (See above page 29.)



DHARMAPALA (5th—6th century A.D.) was a native of Tambarattha (Tirunelveli district) became head of the Buddhist monastery called Bhataraditta Vihara at Kanchipuram. He wrote commentaries on Buddhist texts such as *Paramartha Manjusha*.

DHARMAPALA OF KANCHEI. (See above page 29.)

BUDDHA NANDI and SARIPUTRA (7th century A.D.) belonged to Bodhimangai village in the Cola country. At Thalicheri near Kottappadi, Sambandar, the Saiva saint vanquished them in theological controversy.

VAJRABODHI (661-730) of the Pandyan country, an adherent of the Vajrayana school, was contemporaneous with Narasimhavarman. Amoghavajra was his disciple. He went to Nalanda, Kapilavastu and then to Ceylon and China. He carried the text of the Maha Prajnaparamita to China. He translated Buddhist works into Chinese.

BODHIRUCI was a Brahmana of the Kasyapa gotra from South India. He lived in the 7th-8th centuries A.D. He went to China during the early days of T'ang dynasty and settled there. He was extraordinarily intelligent and his name itself which means 'intelligence-loving' indicates this. "He was considered as one the greatest translators of Buddhist texts. It is said that he was 156 years old when he died in 727 A.D. having devoted his entire life to the work of translating Sanskrit texts."

BUDDHAMITRA (11th century A.D.), a prince of Ponparri village in Arantangi taluk of the Tanjore district, composed the *Virasoliyam* at the request of Virarajendra Cola (1070 A.D.).

PERUNDEVANAR (11th century A.D.) was a student of Buddhhamitra. He wrote a commentary on the *Virasoliyam*, the Tamil grammar composed by his teacher.

KAVIRAJARAJA was a Buddhist poet of 12th century A.D.

BUDDHAMITRA and MAHAKASYAPA (12th century A.D.). The Ceylonese texts call them the "Cola Theras". They went from their home to Ceylon.

ANURAUDHA (12th century A.D.) of the Pandyan country became the head of the Mulasomavihara at Kanchi and has written the *Abhidhammatthasangha*, the *Paramartha-Viniccaya* and the *Namarupapariccheda* which became popular in Ceylon.

DHARMAKIRTI (13th century A.D.) was another Buddhist acharya of the Pandyan country who went from South India to Ceylon, where he organised an international conference of Buddhists, under the patronage of Parakrama Bahu II. The *Dakṣiṇām* and the *Ulasam* are works which are ascribed to him.



### CEYLON.

DEVANAMPIYA TISSA, king of Ceylon, was a contemporary ruler and a great friend of Asoka. It was during his time that Asoka sent his son Mahinda to Ceylon to effect the conversion of the monarch and his people to Buddhism. The capital of Ceylon was then at Anuradhapuram. The most famous of the monuments he built is the Mahavihara at Anuradhapura. He was also responsible for the erection of sixty-eight rock dwellings which constituted the Vihara of the Shrine Hill. It was later named Mihintale, in consequence of its having been once visited by Mahinda. Tissa is also credited with the construction of the Thuparama Dagaba, the first Dagaba erected in Ceylon. It is also the oldest building in Ceylon. Aritta, the nephew and minister of the king was deputed by his royal master to go to India with the two-fold mission of getting a branch of the Bodhi-tree for Ceylon and also to request Sanghamitra, daughter of Asoka to visit Ceylon and convert the ladies in Lanka. It was in his regime, it is said, that the Sixth Buddhist Council was held.

DUTTHAGAMINI restored the fallen fortunes of Buddhism in Ceylon early in the 2nd century B.C. Elara, a Tamil king, who had established himself in Ceylon was defeated by him, a zealous patriot and a Buddhist. After attaining a victory over Elara, he tried to extend Buddhism and restore it to its former glory. He built a meeting hall for the monks. It is called the Brazen Palace or brass-roofed palace. More celebrated than this monument is that of the "Great Shrine" or Ruwanweli Dagaba wherein he placed the relics of the Buddha brought from the Naga world. It is said that the Seventh Buddhist Council was held in his time.

VATTAGAMINI, who reigned in the first quarter of the first century B.C. was noted for the erection of another great dagaba at Abhayagiri. From the time of the erection of this building a schism seems to have set in the religion. This division which lasted for fourteen centuries marred the progress of Buddhism in Ceylon. Fa-Hien tells us that the dagabas were still in their glory in the 4th century A.D. and that he was impressed with the Abhayagiri dagaba built by Vattagamini. The *Mahavamsa* refers to it as one of the most sacred of the Anuradhapura shrines. During his time an Abhayagiri school of Buddhism grew up which not only became a rival in importance to the great Vihara but also supported the authority of certain books which the other rival sect excluded from the Canon. It was during the reign of this king that the Pali Canon was written down. It was also at this time that the Eighth Buddhist Council was held.

MAHASENA (300 A.D.) adopted the tenets hostile to the great Vihara and prescribed rules for its monks. The monks fled to the south-east of the island and for nine years the ancient foundation was left desolate. The Brazen Palace and many other Mahavihara





buildings were pulled down and the materials were used to extend the buildings of the rival school of the Abhayagiri monks. But later at the investigation of his minister, Mahasena tried to restore the monuments and the prestige of the Mahavihara. It is with Mahasena and Sri Meghavanna his son that the cult of Mahinda begins. An image of Mahinda was made and carried in a procession. This was probably a measure directed to the restoration of the prestige of Mahavihara and also to ward off the influence of the rival community of the Jetavana. It is during the time of Sri Meghavanna that the sacred tooth of Buddha was brought from India to Ceylon and enshrined at Kandy and the cult of the worship of the relics began.

**DHATUSENA.**—It was during this king's reign that the *Mahavamsa* was compiled from archives of the Mahavihara. The chronicle affirms that Dhatusena (463 A.D.) was responsible for publishing the *Mahavamsa* written by the poet Mahanama. He erected an image of Metteyya (Maitreya) the coming Buddha.

**BUDDAGHOSA** lived in the 5th century A. D. during the time of King Mahanama of Ceylon and studied the texts of the *Tiṭṭaka* and the Sinhalese *Atthakathas* or commentaries, while living in the great monastery of Anuradhapura. Later, as the first fruits of his studies, he wrote a systematic work on Buddhism, namely the *Vissuddhimagga*. He wrote the Sinhalese commentaries on the chief texts of the *Tiṭṭaka* in Pali. He belonged to a Brahmana family and hailed from the neighbourhood of Bodhi-Gaya. He was converted to Buddhism by monk Revata, who stimulated him to go to Ceylon to study the Sinhalese commentaries. He was a commentator *par excellence*. He is said to have visited Burma about 450 A. D. taking with him books of the Pali Canon.

**PARAKRAMA BAHU** was largely influenced by the stories of the Bodhisatva recorded in the Jatakas. On the death of his uncle he became the ruler of Ceylon and after making elaborate preparations defeated the Tamils and carried his triumphant victory into South India itself. Then he began the establishment and the purification of the Buddhist religion and erected temples, dagabas and monasteries. He tolerated the existence of all the three fraternities, the Abhayagiri, Jetavana and the Mahavihara schools. He settled the divisions which existed in the Mahavihara itself and restored unity. Through the monks brought from South India he was able to unite the two systems, namely the Mahavihara and the non-conformists. The revival of the Buddhist religion begun by Vijaya Bahu in the 11th century A. D. was completed in the 12th century A. D. (1164) by the great Parakrama Bahu.



**Burma.**

**ANAWRAHTA**—(1044–77 A.D.)—In the 11th century A. D. the Pagan ruler Anawrahta (1077 A.D.) sacred Thaton and carried away all the sacred Pali scriptures to his city. It was due mainly to this event that the Theravada form of Buddhism was established as the State religion of Burma. Pagan has many monasteries built by this ruler the most famous of these being the Shwe-zigon.

**KYANZITTHA** (1084–1112 A.D.)—During his time Buddhism flourished in Burma. Devout Buddhists fleeing on account of persecution from India took refuge in his country. Eight Indian monks were entertained by him. He listened to their tales of Ananda temple at Udayagiri and the outcome of this is the construction of the famous temple of Ananda in 1090 A.D. Two statues of the founder Kyanzittha and his teacher are found at the feet of a gigantic Buddha in this temple. Forty smaller pagodas such as the Payeinma were built in his capital. Bone relics sent from Ceylon were placed in the Muechanta pagoda. The unfinished Shwe-zigon pagoda was also completed during his reign.

Kyanzittha exhorted a Cola lord to propagate Buddhism and he was the first Burmese king to restore the shrine at Buddha Gaya.

**NARAPATISITHU** (1173–1210 A.D.)—During his reign Buddhism was once more flourishing in Ceylon after yet another Hindu persecution. Uttarajiva and Chapata, two monks from Burma sailed to Ceylon from Bassern and returned home. Chapata returned to Burma in 1192 A.D. and had brought four learned monks with him. One of them Ananda was from Kanchi.

Narapatisthu was impressed by the monks and he encouraged their ordinations. Burmese clergymen were even sent to Ceylon for ordinations by the monks at the Mahavihara and such intercourse led to the establishment of Ceylon as the chief foreign influence on Burmese religion. Thaton Buddhism which came from Kanchipuram had been in Burma for three centuries when in 1192 A.D. Ceylon Buddhism was introduced and finally obliterated traces of Buddhism from Kanchipuram.

Narapatisthu was a great builder of temples. His greatest works are the superb Gawdawpalin and Sulamani temples at Pagan with the Mimalaunggyaung Dammayazika and Chaukpala nearby. His smaller pagodas are the Myatherndan and Sweedan in Thayetmyo, Zedhhla in Monywa, Paundgan in Kyankse and Shwetaza in Shwabo town.

**HTILOMENLO NANTAUNGMYA** (1210–34 A.D.)—Last of the great temple builders. He built the Mahabodhi temple on the model of the temple at Buddha Gaya and another temple named after himself. During his time numerous Pali treatises and commentaries were written. Monastic life flourished.



NARATHITRAPATI (1254-87 A.D.) built the Mingalazedi pagoda, with a view to attaining of Nirvana. In it he enshrined fifty-one gold and silver statues of kings and queens and over this he set up an image of the Buddha in A.D. 1274.

### **Tibet.**

PADMASAMBHAVA was the son of King Indrabhuti, ruler of Udayana. He was a teacher of Tantras at Nalanda when he was invited by the Tibetan king. He was a great Yogacara teacher. In Tibet he established Lamaism or Tantric Buddhism and there to this day he is considered to be Buddha himself. He lived in the 8th century A.D.

TI-SRON-DE-TSAN was king of Tibet in the 8th century. He invited the Indian theologians, Santarakshita and Padmasambhava who succeeded in establishing the doctrine of Yogacara in Tibet.

ATISA went from India to Tibet about 1040 A.D., where he played a prominent part in the propagation of Buddhism. In fact, he established a new school called *ka-dam-pa* which propagated practices less ascetic and more ritualistic than those of the school which he supplanted. This school subsequently became the centre of the Lamaist creed under the name of "sect of the righteous" or "of the yellow caps".

TSORI-KA-PA who lived in the 14th-15th century was the reformer of Lamaism. He established discipline in the monasteries. He also introduced new dogmas of which the most important was the recognition of "living Buddhas" according to which the priests and monks were considered to be incarnations of deities and saints. This new doctrine gave enormous power to the Lamaist clergy and culminated in the creation of a Grand Lama and later in 1640 of a sole temporal and spiritual chief of all Tibet bearing the title Dalai-Lama. He also founded the monastery of Galdam.

### **Japan.**

SHOTOKU TAISHI (593-622 A.D.) the Prince, was a great supporter of Buddhism in Japan. Like Muhammad and St. Augustine of Canterbury, he influenced his country profoundly as the former two did in their own countries. He was responsible in building up a greater portion of the city of Nara. In Horyuji he built a monastic settlement which became the prototype of Japanese architecture to this day. He himself wrote commentaries on the *Saddharma-Pundarika*, the *Vimalakirti Sutra* and the *Srimala Sutra*.



**China.**

MING-Ti was an emperor of the Han dynasty of China. He reigned about the latter half of the 1st century A.D. He is said to have sent a deputation of eighteen persons into Khotan who brought back a collection of Buddhist works. This deputation included the Indian theologians, Matanga and Gobharana.

YAO-SHING reigned during the end of the 4th century A.D. Buddhism was recognised as the State religion from his time, and the Chinese began to study the Buddhist scripture for themselves. It was during this period that Fa-Hien, the famous traveller from China, visited India.

SUN-DO the Chinese monk was responsible for the introduction of Buddhism in Korea in the 4th century A.D.

KUMARASIVA was the greatest translator of the Buddhist texts into Chinese. He lived in China in the 4th-5th centuries A.D. It was his enormous output that was largely responsible for the success of Buddhism in China. Only in his time the Chinese branch of the Sangha was established.

FA-HIEN was the earliest of the Chinese Buddhist pilgrims to visit India. It was during the time of Chandragupta II of the Gupta dynasty that this famous Chinese pilgrim stayed in India for nine years.

Fa-Hien came overland from China to India almost on foot enduring the hardships and dangers of the Gobi desert and the mountainous tracts of Khotan, the Pamirs, Swat and Gandhara. Reaching Peshawar he made a detour across the hills to the north and west, entered the Punjab and then passed on to places like Mathura, Samkasya, Kanauj, Sravasti, Kapilavastu, Kusinagara, Vaisali and Pataliputra, etc. He then proceeded to Tamralipti and Java by sea on his voyage home. He wrote an account of his travels which gives us very valuable and interesting information about the Government and the social, religious and economic conditions of the Gangetic provinces during the reign of Chandragupta II.

While he was very young his father sent him to the service of the Buddhist society and later he was sent to a monastery. When he finished his noviciate and had become a monk he decided to visit India, the holy land of Buddhism, in search of complete copies of Vinaya Pitaka. His travels lasted for fifteen years (399-414 A.D.) of which nine were spent in India.

Fa-Hien stayed in the imperial city of Pataliputra for three years learning Sanskrit. He mentions two imposing and elegant monasteries found in this city. One was of the Hinayana Buddhism and the other the Mahayana tenanted by six or seven hundred monks whose learned expositions of the Buddhist law and disciplined life attracted people





from all parts of India. His reference to the splendour of Asoka's palace and its grandeur is interesting.

It appears from his description that this faith was gradually gaining ground in Mathura where he noticed 20 Buddhist establishments. Fa-Hien was favourably impressed by the piety and learning of these monks. Buddhism, he remarks, was still vigorous and prosperous though by no means so in Madhyadesa where ancient sites like Kapilavastu, Kusinagara and Bodhi Gaya were in ruins. In some of the towns of Madhyadesa he saw only one or two monasteries and sometimes, more. Brahmanism predominated but the relation between the Brahmins and Buddhists were generally cordial.

Fa-Hien after a successful mission left for Tamralipti with copies of Buddhist Canon, images and paintings. After staying there for two years he left for Ceylon.

Hsuan-Tsang was the most famous of the Chinese pilgrims who visited India. He was born in 600 A.D. and belonged to a respectable Chinese family. From a very early age he was keenly interested in the religion of his forefathers and devoted his time to religious study. He became a monk at the age of 20. A desire to secure the authentic scriptures from India, prompted him to pay a visit to the holy land of Buddhism. In 629 A.D. he left his home and reached Gandhara in 630. It is said that he travelled for fifteen years and then reached home in 645 A.D. Till his death in 664 A.D. his time was spent on studying Buddhist scriptures and translating them into Chinese. Unlike Fa-Hien he travelled throughout India and returned by the land-route through which he had come. It is said that he came overland across the Gobi desert passing Tashkand and Samarkand and then crossed the Hindu-Kush into India. He remained in Harsha's empire for eight years and in the Nalanda University for two years. Prior to 641 A.D. he had visited the South, the Pallava capital of Kanchi and the Western Chalukyan kingdom.

Hsuan-Tsang describes his travels in his book the *Si-yu-ki* or the "Records of the western world". This book is a treasure-house of information on Indian History and especially on Harsha and his achievements.

While staying in Kanauj, Hsuan-Tsang was invited by Harsha to his court where the pilgrim was requested to stay as a royal guest. Harsha organised a splendid assembly at Kanauj in honour of Hsuan-Tsang and soon after the conclusion of the convocation, the king was converted to Mahayana Buddhism. The king then took his guest to Prayag where he held the sixth quinquennial gathering for the distribution of charity. After this the pilgrim departed to his native land carrying with him a mass of valuable manuscripts, images and relics of the Buddha.

The glories of Kanauj the imperial city are expatiated at length by this pilgrim. There were one hundred Buddhist monasteries with more than 10,000 brethren belonging to both the vehicles.



The famous assembly at Kanauj was specially convened in honour of Hsuan-Tsang and the propagation of the doctrine of the Mahayana. Though Buddhism was on the wane in the country, there were many Buddhist monks. Hsuan-Tsang has numbered nearly 200,000 of them. He has referred to the assembly at Kanauj in detail. There were a large concourse of Buddhists, Brahmins and Jains and a thousand monks from Nalanda. A golden image of Buddha was carried in procession. As the procession marched the king, he says, scattered pearls and golden flowers in honour of the Jewels Buddha, Dharma, Sangha. Then the conference opened with Hsuan-Tsang as the leader of the discussion. He dwelt on the merits of the Mahayana. After the conclusion of the Prayaga assembly he took leave of Harsha who provided him with an escort and also helped him to carry the books and images on horse back. Subsequently Harsha met him again and provided him with necessary expenses for his journey to China.

Hsuan-Tsang also visited the South. In Ka-leng-ha he says that there were few Buddhists the majority being people of other religions. There were only ten monasteries and five hundred brethren. In Southern Kosala he found the king a Buddhist, 100 monasteries and 1,000 brethren all Mahayanists. His reference to Po-lo-mo-lo-ki-li where there was a monastery built for Nagarjuna by Yin-Cheng, is interesting. In Andhra he found twenty odd Buddhist monasteries. Then he went to Dhanakataka and to Chulya (?) (Chu-li-ya). The Buddhist monasteries here were in ruins. His references to Kanchi city and Pulakesin II are far more interesting. In the time of Pulakesin II there were more than 100 Buddhist monasteries. The benevolent sway of Pulakesin, he says reached far and wide. Hsuan-Tsang's account of the kingdom of Pulakesin gives us quite a good view of the social and economic conditions. It is said that Hsuan-Tsang visited it in 641 A.D.

I-Tsing, another Chinese monk visited India soon after the death of Hsuan-Tsang in A.D. 671. I-tsing arrived at Tamralipti in A.D. 673, studied for some time at Nalanda where he collected many texts. On his way home he stayed at Sribhoga (Palembong) and studied and translated many Buddhist texts. In A.D. 695, after sending his work in advance to China to be translated by Ta-tsin, he returned home. Because of this incident, his work is known as "Record of lan sent home from the southern seas".

Born in 635 A.D., I-tsing was admitted to the order in 649 A.D. when he was fourteen. He received full ordination at the age of twenty-one.

On his way to India he stayed at Bhoga and then in Malaya. From there he sailed to Eastern India. In 673 A.D. he reached Tamralipti. He says that he lived at Nalanda Vihara for ten years (675-685). Then again on his return journey he went to Tamralipti and then to Sri Bhoga. In 699 A.D. he departed from India. Between 671 and 695 A.D. he travelled through more than thirty countries collected 400 Buddhist texts, and a real plan of the diamond seat or the Vajrasana of Buddha.



I-tsing says that he is a follower of the Mulasarvastivada school. He refers to the predominance of this school in Malayasia.

The object of his work was to correct misrepresentations of Vinaya rules and to refute the opinions held by scholars of Vinayadhara in China. He therefore dwells chiefly on monastic life and discipline in his work. His work is indispensable for the study of Buddhism. It is an exclusive representation of Mulasarvastivada school. I-tsing gives graphical representation of this school, which according to him flourished in North and Central India and had followers in East and Western India and the South. No other school flourished so widely before or after 7th century A.D. in India. He mentions two schools of Mahayana, the Madhyamika (of Nagarjuna) and Yogacara (of Asanga) which were existing in India.

### **SOME SITES OF BUDDHIST INTEREST.**

By Dr. A. Aliyappan and P. R. Srinivasan.

#### **Amaravati.**

The village of Amaravati is situated on the southern bank of the Krishna river, ~~about~~ in 16 miles to the west of Guntur. It had become the capital of the Andhra kings by the end of the 1st century A.D. and was known as "Dhanyakataka" at that time. Here stood the famous stupa, called in earlier times "Mahacetiya" (Great chaitya) and in later ages, "Dipadinne" (Mound of lamps). It was begun about 200 B.C. and was completed about 250 A.D. The town of Amaravati was sacred to the Buddhists as the stupa contained the relics of the Buddha. This stupa was embellished with beautiful bas-relief sculptures depicting scenes from stories of Buddhism. These sculptures can be divided into four groups. The oldest sculptures bear inscriptions which are in Brahmi characters of about 200 B.C. Sculptures belonging to the second series have inscriptions in characters of about the 1st century A.D. Later on the railing was erected between 150-200 A.D., probably by the Buddhist Acharya Nagarjuna. It contained a large number of sculptured panels. A final set of sculptures was added about 200-250 A.D.

*The first period (second century B.C.).*—A few pieces from Amaravati and Jaggayyapeta, belong to this period. They can be identified by their low relief. There is a free standing figure, with its front and back sides very much flattened and it resembles the earliest Mauryan figures. Other examples of sculptures belonging to this period include a pillar from Amaravati surmounted by four elephants.

*Second period (about 100 A.D.).*—Panels representing either the enlightenment of the Buddha, or his first sermon or his death belong to this period. Their symbols are a throne under the Bodhi tree, a throne under the wheel of the law, and a stupa respectively. There



are larger panels also bearing lotus flowers rising from a vase (symbol of the Buddha's birth) and any other carvings such as human figures and a five-headed cobra. There are also three figures of the Buddha in human form belonging to this period.

*Third period (150-200 A.D.).*—The outer railing, which enclosed the procession path between it and the stupa, was built now. On its outer side, the railing is decorated with big lotuses, while on the coping is seen an undulating garland. On the innerside are carved scenes from Buddha's life and also the Jataka stories. These panels incidentally show a variety of buildings, furnish information on customs and jewellery in vogue in India nearly two thousand years ago. Some of the finest of the coping sculptures are the disposal of Buddha's relics, the story of the wicked elephant Nalagiri and a scene in the court of king Bandhuma. The first sculpture consists of two panels, the upper one with men seated round a table, dividing the relics of the Buddha into eight parts and the lower one showing women dancing to celebrate Buddha's attainment of Nirvana. In the second piece of sculpture we find two episodes of the story being worked into a single picture, the elephant on the left attacking people and the same on the right prostrating itself before the Buddha, is shown as a pillar of fire.

*Fourth period (200-300 A.D.).*—Sculptures belonging to this period are represented on a small scale. There is a representation of the great stupa complete with its railing, showing the scenes from the life of the Buddha, and above the stupa the renunciation, the temptation and enlightenment are represented. In the temptation scene and as a child beneath the tree, Buddha is shown in human form. In the other scenes he is symbolically represented.

#### Bhattiprolu.

Bhattiprolu is a village in the Repalle taluk of the Guntur district about 24 miles west by south from Masulipattanam. There was a stupa here built entirely of brick. It was one of the earliest stupas where the alabs encasing the projections at the four cardinal points alone were sculptured. A number of interesting articles were found in the stupa area during the excavation conducted by A. Rea of the Archaeological Survey of India in 1892. They include three inscribed votive caskets each containing a stone and a crystal reliquary with relics and jewels. Of these, the relics have been given away to the Maha Bodhi Society of Calcutta; the jewels consisting of flowers made of thin sheets of pure gold and beads of gold, crystal and of semi-precious stones are kept in the reserve collection of the Madras Museum. The large stone caskets and the smaller stone casket and crystal reliquaries are shown in the Buddhist gallery. The caskets and a crystal bead are inscribed in Brahmi characters which differ from those of Asokan edicts. The inscriptions mention the relics of the Buddha. From the form of the script, the finds are dated to about the time of Asoka. (Cf. *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. II, pp. 323-329).





### Jaggayyapeta.

Jaggayyapeta was also another important centre of Buddhism. It is situated on the northern bank of the Krishna almost opposite to Amaravati. A large stupa seems to have existed here also. Of this stupa only a few sculptured fragments have so far been recovered. The style of the sculptures, except one, is akin to that of the sculptures of the first period of the Amaravati stupa. These sculptures are therefore assigned to about 200 B.C.

### Nagarjunakonda.

In March 1926, Sri A. R. Sarasvati, Telugu Assistant in the Office of the Government Epigraphist, discovered several brick mounds and marble pillars with inscriptions in Brahmi characters of the second and third centuries A.D., at the hill called Nagarjunakonda, in the Palnad taluk of Guntur district. Sarasvati's discovery was a momentous one both for South Indian history and for the history of Buddhism. He recovered from oblivion not only the capital of the great Southern Ikshvaku dynasty but also a great part of the meagre inscriptional records of the Buddhist community of an important epoch in Andhra history. During the last three decades, the department of archaeology has been excavating at the site and has published three valuable reports. These are, in the chronological order, Prof. Vogel's report on the *Prakrit Inscriptions from the Buddhist Site at Nagarjunakonda* (1931 and 1933), Longhurst's memoir *The Buddhist Antiquities of Nagarjunakonda, Madras Presidency* (1938) and Ramachandran's memoir *Nagarjunakonda* (1963).

Nagarjunakonda is of topical interest now on account of the Nandikonda project which, when completed, would submerge the whole valley. Where the ancient city of Vijayapuri, the capital of the Ikshvaku monarchs stood in all its glory seventeen centuries ago, will soon be an artificial lake impounding the life-giving waters of the Krishna. The archaeologists fought to the last ditch to save the Nagarjunakonda site from the fate that is soon to overtake it. They are naturally somewhat sentimental over it for Nagarjunakonda is of international interest to the Buddhists. But from the irrigation engineer's point of view, the valley in which the site lies is an ideal spot for the reservoir which in the interests of the food supply of the republic, they are compelled to utilize it for the project in spite of the opposition from the archaeologists. The Government of Andhra have aptly decided to name the reservoir as *Nagarjunasagar* and to house all the portable relics of the ancient town in a museum.

Nagarjunakonda is known to Buddhist tradition as Sriparvata.

A string of personal names of royal ladies, all of them terminating in Sri or Siri occur in one of the inscriptions. Some of them are Arya Sri, Skanda Sri, Skandakoti Sri, Nadi Sri, Saka Sri, etc. The names Pandi's Sri, Parijata Sri, and Samudra Sri, sound somewhat unusual.



The last name, Samuvarsi might suggest the importance attached to the sea. Another name, Kusumavati, is the most poetic of all, almost Tagorean. Contact with central India is suggested by the name Gokasiri which in the simpler form Gok occurs at Sanchi. That Vishnu was not ignored is shown by the name Vishnuvati. As for male names, along with typical Buddhist names Ananda, Dhamma, Dhammaghosha, we get such names as Chandamukha (Chandramukha), Yakkana derived from Yaksha, and Kanarese names such as Chali-Kinnaka (moon).

The Ikshvakus were obviously a very cultured dynasty and were politically important enough to have marriage alliances with royal dynasties in western and central India.

The importance of Nagarjunakonda to the Buddhist world must obviously have been on account of the Mahachaitya or Great Stupa enshrining a relic of the Buddha himself. It was perhaps only enlarged by the pious princess Chamtisiri. When it stood intact, it must have been an impressive monument with its seventy feet high dome, surmounted by marble umbrellas and with the tall massed Ayaka pillars at the four cardinal points. The presence of Acharya Nagarjuna who is said to have spent his last few years there must have invested Nagarjunakonda with additional importance. In order to house the Buddhist monks of Ceylon who came to Nagarjunakonda, Queen Bodhisiri built a monastery which was named Sihalahihara. Roman coins and a sculpture representing Dionysus with a drinking horn in his left hand definitely show contacts, direct or indirect, with the West.

Representations of the footprints of the Buddha with the various marks of greatness carved on them were revered as holy by the Buddhists. Such carvings were known in Prakrit as *Patipada* or *Pratipada* in Sanskrit. Mr. Longhurst recovered three *pratipadas* from Nagarjunakonda. Along the tip of the toes of one of them was an inscription which states that this sculpture was the gift of a medical exponent. It is well known that the fraternity of Buddhist monks included medical and scientific men and a certain Nagarjuna (not to be confused with Acharya Nagarjuna) is said to be the father of Hindu Chemistry. It is likely that along with Buddhist theology, novices were taught the practical arts at the monasteries of Nagarjunakonda.

Personally speaking, I find the inscriptions of Nagarjunakonda most fascinating. They are in Brahmi characters and the language employed is Prakrit related to Pali which was very widely used in Southern India. Prof. Sten Konow is of the view that the dialect of Pali used in the Nagarjunakonda inscriptions has been influenced by Kanarese. This taken together with the fact that the Ikshvakus had marriage relations, among others, with the Kadambas of North Kanara (Banavasi) makes his theory of the Kanarese origin of the Ikshvakus somewhat plausible. The Ikshvakus who claimed descent from Ikshvaku, the mythical progenitor of the Solar dynasty of Ayodhya, were orthodox Brahmins as



were several other royal dynasties of Southern India such as the Satavahanas, Kadambas and even the Pallavas. The inscriptions mention three generations of Ikshvaku monarchs, Vasishtiputra Sri Chamtamula, Madhariputra Sri Vira Purushadatta and Vasishtiputra Sri Eshvula Chamtamula whose *prasastis* or eulogies make it very clear that they were followers of Vedic Brahmanism and earned merit by the performance of Vedic sacrifices such as *agnishoma*, *vajapeya*, and *asvamedha*. The royal ladies, on the other hand, seem to have been devout Buddhists, for we find in the various inscriptions the names of fifteen or more of them as donors of stupas, monasteries and mantapas. The most outstanding among these royal ladies is Adavi Chamtisiri, daughter of King Chamtamula and sister of King Sri Vira Purushadatta. Mahadevi Bhatidevi, queen of Vira Purushadatta, also figures among the donors. The situation we have here is not that of a few aberrant admirers of Buddhism in a Hindu royal household; the two faiths seem to have been allowed to exist side by side in the royal clan, the esoteric old faith and the more popular new faith which at this time had gained favour with the masses of the people. Sripavata is closely associated with the personal history of the great Madhyamika Buddhist Acharya, Nagarjuna. The Hill, named Nagarjuna's Hill after the great teacher, is the most prominent of a series of hills which form a big horse-shoe on the eastern side of the Krishna river which flows here northwards in a broad, majestic swoop. The Satavahana rulers of Andhra who preceded the Ikshvakus and were known to the Greeks and Romans as *Sadanoi* encouraged maritime trade to which testimony is borne by their coins with the ship emblem. Flourishing trade meant prosperity for the people and more particularly with the merchants and kings. Buddhism seems to have been very popular with the merchant classes, for we find from several inscriptions on Buddhist monuments in the Krishna valley that members of the Vaisya community made liberal donations for the construction of stupas and viharas. Merchandise must have been carried up and down the river which provided the most important highway of commerce. The presence of a wharf and godowns on the Krishna near Nagarjunakonda shows beyond any doubt that trade contributed to the importance and prosperity of Vijayapuri.

The excavations conducted at Nagarjunakonda by Mr. Longhurst between the years 1927 and 1931 brought to light the ruins of a very large stupa referred to in the inscriptions as the *Mahachetiya*, the ruins of eight smaller stupas, four monasteries, six apsidal temples, four pavilions or *mantapas*, and a palace. The bricks laid in mud mortar were 20" by 10" by 3". The mouldings and decorations were in stucco and the buildings were whitewashed, sometimes gilded and decorated. Parts of the stupas, temples, etc., which were sculptured were of the soft easily worked Palnad marble which has a pleasing bluish or greyish tint. Over five hundred pieces of sculptures most of them bas-reliefs, which formed parts of pillars, railings and plinths, have been recovered and these will be the most impressive museum material which will remind future generations of the glory of Vijayapuri. Several



life-size statues of the Buddha, relic caskets of gold and silver, one of which contained a bone relic of the Buddha himself, pottery and other household articles are among the other antiquities of interest. Of special interest are the pottery vessels somewhat like laboratory flasks which might have been used for woman named Buddhi, the sister of Moda, the Saka. This shows beyond any doubt that Sakas were present among the population of Vijayapuri. Further support to this interesting fact is given by an excellent sculpture of a stout, somewhat morose, sleepy-eyed door-keeper on one of the *mantapa* pillars from the Palace area. This door-keeper has a helmet and is dressed in quilted tunic, trousers, and leggings. There is no mistaking of his identity. The likelihood is that as in Mauryan palaces which had foreigners employed as palace servants, the Ikshvakus also had foreigners similarly employed.

Nagarjunakonda was thus a truly cosmopolitan centre of Buddhism apart from being the capital of a very broadminded though short-lived Hindu dynasty. The Pallava conquest destroyed the Ikshvaku dynasty and the Hindu revival submerged the Buddhist community of Vijayapuri. And now Nagarjunasagar will soon submerge what was once the holy Sri Parvata to the Buddhist world. If Princess Chamtisiri were here, she would have protested. To her we would perhaps say, "Oh Mahatalavarini, we do honour you and your works, but we need more water."

Excavations conducted in 1955-56 have located and cleared the Ikshvaku palaces situated on the bank of the river. The most interesting discovery is of a temple of Hariti in front of which there is a quadrangle with raised galleries of rows of seats on all the four sides, almost like an open air theatre.

The collection of sculptures includes over 600 pieces. The style of art is a continuation of the Amaravati style, but the carving is in higher relief and more attention has been paid to details. Unlike the Amaravati sculptures, here the sculptures are better preserved. They are a mine of information regarding the life of the people of those days as every one of the objects used by them and almost a complete array of scenes taken from the lives of *nagarikas* and *gramyikas* are realistically portrayed.

#### Goli.

This village is in the Palnad taluk of Guntur district. Goli is probably the locality referred to by Sewell in his *List of Antiquarian Remains of the Madras Presidency* under the heading of Mallavaram. This place is situated about three miles to the west of the site, where a stupa was dug out, which is a mile and a half north-west of Goli on the Gollaru, a tributary of the river Krishna.

In 1926 portions of the stupa were excavated from a small mound in a field near the Goli village. Dr. Jovean-Dubreuil of Pondicherry excavated this mound and it is with his help that the sculptures were acquired for the Madras Museum.





There are friezes depicting various Jataka stories and scenes from the Buddha's life. Chaddanta Jataka, Vessantara Jataka, Subjugation of the elephant Nalagiri, the temptation of the Buddha and the Sasa Jataka are some of them.

While there were at least four periods of construction in Amaravati it is not the case with the Goli stupa. The stupa was very small compared to that of Amaravati and the whole stupa might even have been built in a few months. Of the different styles of sculpture found at Amaravati, that of the fourth period bears a strong resemblance to that of the Goli sculptures. One feature of resemblance between the fourth period friezes of Amaravati and those of Goli is that the scenes are separated by three knobs or rivet-heads carved like a lotus in full bloom. Figures of Buddha are represented as wearing a loose robe hanging from the neck to the toes, completely covering his body. The same posture and robe are found both in the majority of Amaravati sculptures of the fourth period and two out of five Buddha figures from the Goli stupa. And lastly the lower margin of the Goli friezes is designed as a sunk band with or without projecting heads of sphinx-like animals placed at intervals. The average height and width of these friezes agree in general with those of the Amaravati friezes of the fourth period.

Thus we see that the Goli stupa should have been built at about the time when the Amaravati sculptures of the fourth period were added, i.e., about 250.

#### **Sankaram.**

This village in the Visakhapatnam district is situated about a mile to the east of the taluk town of Anakapalle. At a short distance to the north of Sankaram, are two isolated hills called Bojannakonda, set east to west. On these hills are numerous monolithic and structural remains. The monolithic stupas on these are the earliest of their class in South India. During the excavation conducted here in 1907-08 by the Archaeological Survey of India, a number of objects such as pottery, terracotta architectural ornaments, terracotta seals and a few coins were found, most of which are now preserved in the reserve collections of the Madras Museum.

#### **Ramatirtham.**

This village is situated about 8 miles to the north-east of Vizianagaram in the Visakhapatnam district. There is a hill to the north of the village. On the northern side of the hill are found extensive ruins of a Buddhist monastery. A number of objects including pottery, inscribed seals, a few coins and terracotta objects were unearthed here during the excavations carried out in 1909-11, the Archaeological Survey of India. Most of these are now preserved in the Madras Museum, in the reserve collection.



### Sanchi (Ancient Kakanada or Kakanava).

The stupas of Sanchi in Bhopal are one of the most striking group of architectural remains of Buddhist India. The original brick stupa (Stupa No. 1) built by Asoka at this place was partly destroyed, and what remained was encased in the larger one which was enlarged in the 2nd century B.C. by the Sunga Agnimitra. The Sungas also built two smaller stupas for the relics of Buddha's disciples, Sariputta and Mogallana and seven or eight others. Asoka as *Yuvaraja* was viceroy at Ujjaini, the famous ancient town to the west of Sanchi and it was during his viceroyalty that he had the original stupa at Sanchi built probably on the persuasion of his wife Sakyakumari who was a devout Buddhist. A 45-foot high Asokan pillar with the royal edict stood in front of the southern gate-way of the stupa. The pillar was broken up many years ago by a local zamindar, but the stump still remains in its original place. The crowning lions of the pillar are now preserved in the Museum at Sanchi. The greyish white limestone of which the pillar was made was brought here from Chunar several hundreds of miles away. Some decades after the Sungas, the Andhras came into power over Avanti and during their rule the four magnificent gate-ways (*toranas*) of the stupa were added. To the older monasteries and shrines additions were made during the regime of later rulers such as the Guptas and Paramaras.

The main stupa of Sanchi, referred to by archaeologists, as Stupa No. 1, is 120 feet in diameter and 54 feet in height. Running round the base of the stupa about 16 feet from the ground-level, is a terraced path (*pradakshinapatha*) with balustrade for the purpose of circumambulation. Access to this circumambulatory terrace from the ground-level is by a stone staircase. The hemispherical dome (*anda*) is truncated at the top and is surmounted by a pavilion (*harmika*) from which rises the shaft of the umbrella (*chhatra*), the Indian emblem of sovereignty. An uncarved stone railing about 11 feet high goes round the entire stupa. The four *toranas* or gateways each about 34 feet high, were added in the place of pre-existing entrances at the four cardinal points, later on, during the rule of the Andhra kings. These *toranas* have a unique charm of their own and have been copied and adapted in various ways in Buddhist countries of the Far-East. Each gateway consists of two square columns above which are three architraves supported by animal or dwarf figures. From the capitals spring beautiful caryatids (female figures on branches of trees). The two columns, the front and back surfaces of the three architraves and the blocks in the two interspaces between them are all carved in low relief with panels illustrating Buddhist themes. On the summit of the gateway stand the sacred symbols of Buddhism, the Dharmachakra and *triratna* (the trident) flanked by Yakshis.

During the Gupta age the four Buddha images were set up in the procession path at the four cardinal points. Temples and monasteries were also added by the various ruling



dynasties till about the 13th century A.D. when the place came to be neglected and jungles grew up where Asoka and his queen had enshrined the relics of the Buddha and where stood his edict warning the monks against factions.

It was from the art of Sanchi that the art of Amaravati received its inspiration. The Sanchi artists were not quite familiar with stone carving, but were skilled in wood carving. There is some immaturity in their art, but they were devoted to their faith and they succeeded in producing pleasing narrative panels. There was a popular art, and their patrons, the numerous devotees who donated the various parts of the *toranas* left their artists free. There are inscribed over 800 names of donors on the various Sanchi gateways, etc., men and women of several castes and professions and royal personages, soldiers, merchants, carpenters, farmers and last but not least a Yavana (Greek).

Sanchi was a monastery of Hinayanism (Theravada) and was known to Ceylonese Buddhists as Chetiyagiri. Mahendra, on his way to Ceylon, is said to have stopped at Sanchi to receive the blessings of his mother.

#### Ajanta.

The 29 rock-cut caves\* of Ajanta, situated 64 miles north of Aurangabad in Hyderabad have become famous all over the world, during the last hundred years. Though the paintings of Ajanta are most widely spoken of, the architectural beauty of the chaitya-halls (prayer hall with stupa in the centre) (6) and monasteries (23) scooped out of the hills and the excellence of the sculpture (e.g., the dying Buddha in cave XXVI) deserve more attention. These cave shrines and monasteries are the result of the devotion of kings, monks and lay devotees of Buddhism, over a period of nine hundred years from the 2nd century B.C. to the 7th century A.D.

Ajanta was selected for carving of these monuments because of the natural beauty of the place and its peace and seclusion for the monks. Caves VIII, IX, X, XII and XIII are of the 2nd century B.C. It was during the period that the great impression was made by the Buddha's personality and his message of love and kindness and peace, on the unsophisticated masses of South Indian people, and they spared no pains in making the most permanent shrines and monasteries for the monks of that faith, and embellishing them with the best paintings and sculptures. The facade of cave No. X, a prayer hall (apsidal, *vrittayata*) was donated by an Andhra chief, Vasishtiputa Katakadi. During the rule of the Vakatakas (cave Nos. XVI and XVII) the addition of shrines and monasteries continued. A few caves such as caves IV and XXIV are incomplete.

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\* A thirtieth cave has been discovered recently.



In making these rock-cut prayer halls and monks' residences, the architects of Ajanta copied the wooden structures with which they are familiar. In the arched roofs of shrines and in the facades the details of earlier prototypes in wood are faithfully copied in stone. The facades with elaborately carved arched windows above and screens below and entrance chambers are the most fascinating parts of these monuments. The interior is cool and spacious and look like underground *mantapas* with rather stout pillars. The monastery caves have a verandah, four passages on all the four sides of a central hall, and at the farther end at niche for images. Opening on to the four passages are small cubicles or cells for monks. The prayer halls are long halls with aisles and colonnades as in Christian churches, rounded at the back opposite which is the stupa with a passage for circumambulation round it. In the Hinayanist caves, VIII, IX, X, XII and XIII, the niches for images are not present.

The paintings of Ajanta, done under very difficult conditions reaches a high water-mark of perfection. The paintings from the earliest in cave X share in most respects the popular character which we find in the sculptures of Sanchi and are all illustrations of Buddhist legends. The paintings of Ajanta set the standard for painting in the rest of Buddhist world, China (at Tunhuang), Korea, Japan, Indonesia and Central Asia (at Turfan in Khotan).

There are in all over 1,200 rock-cut caves in India, of which 900 are Buddhists, not more than 100 are Brahminical and the rest Jaina. The **apsidal chaitya** is specially Buddhist.

At Ellora (580 A.D. to 850 A.D.) the Buddhists were responsible for twelve of the caves. These are contemporary with the Mahayanist caves of Ajanta. In some of these, the prayer halls and monasteries are combined. Two of the caves (No. XI and XII) here are three-storeyed, with very spacious courtyards and goes about 72 feet deep into the rock.

#### Bharhut.

Bharhut is an ancient Buddhist site in Nagod State, Central India (Baghelkhand district).

There was an early stupa here. Of this the surviving remains mainly consist of portions of the enclosing stone railing which surrounded it. Another local name of the village of Bharhut is Bhaironpur. The remains of the great stupa were discovered by Cunningham in 1873, and have been transferred to the Indian Museum, Calcutta.

This stupa which is now a mound of ruins, was in former times a mound of bricks enshrining the relic-casket deposited inside. It is impossible to know whether the contents of the box were the relics of the Buddha or those of a deceased disciple of his.





Cunningham says that there were also the ruins of a small monastery there which contained among other things a colossal statue and several other small Buddhist figures which could not be dated earlier than 1000 A.D.

The inscription of the eastern gateway clearly records that a stone-structure with its ornamental finish was set up by King Dhanbhuti in the dominion of the Sungas. King Dhanbhuti is said to have erected this gate-way. The date of the stupa has been a matter of controversy. Some scholars say that it was built by Asoka. The railing must have been erected in three stages pre-Sunga and Sunga period, probably from the time of Asoka until 150 B.C.

#### **Sravasti (Saheth—Maheth).**

The capital of Kosala at the time of the Buddha was Sravasti, adjoining which was the famous Jetavana monastery where the Buddha stayed at the request of Anathapindika. Its identification with the remains in the twin villages Saheth-Maheth, was confirmed in the excavations of 1907-08 and 1910-11 when it was also found that Saheth represented Jetavana and Maheth Sravasti proper. Sravasti contained many brick stupas and shrines in one of which was found a group of more than three hundred terracotta panels of Gupta date representing scenes from the Ramayana. The remains here cannot be dated earlier than Kushan times.

Monasteries and stupas, images of the Buddha and terracotta panels have been found here.

#### **Sarnath.**

Sarnath is situated four miles north of Banaras. It is the site of a once famous Buddhist establishment, comprising a huge, "Vihara", large monasteries and stupas, besides innumerable small shrines and objects.

Sarnath occupies a unique position in the Buddhist world, for it was here that Gautama Buddha began to teach his new doctrine. Leaving Gaya and the Bodhi tree under which he obtained enlightenment he came to Banaras to teach his doctrine of suffering and its cessation. At Sarnath he founded his first Community.

Sarnath was known to the Buddhists as the Mrigadava or Deer-park. It was here the doctrine was first promulgated or as the Buddhist say "The wheel of the law was first turned". The seal or symbol of the ancient Sarnath Community took the form of a wheel flanked by two couchant antelopes or deer.

Asoka built a stupa here. Centuries later Fa-Hien and Hsuan-Tsang, the two Chinese travellers found monasteries and viharas at Sarnath. Inscriptions found here extending to 12th century A.D. show the connection of Sarnath with Buddhism.



The Dharmarajika stupa was originally built by Asoka. But the most remarkable monument is the Dhamekh stupa. Then there is the Chaukhandi stupa which seems to be earlier in point of time than the Dhamekh stupa.

Among the sculptures found here the famous lion capital of Asoka's time is one. A colossal Bodhisattva image, and the famous seated Buddha figure were also found here.

### Nalanda.

The Buddhist monastery of Nalanda, near Gaya, came into prominence during Gupta times under the Hindu King Kumaragupta I and till it was sacked by Muslim invaders, it was the most famous teaching centre of Mahayana Buddhism. Nalanda was known to the Buddha and it was important enough even then to be regarded as a good retreat for monks. Started first as a Sangharama (monastery) it rapidly got enlarged into a university. In the words of I-tsing, the Chinese traveller, Nalanda was "the most magnificent temple of learning in *Jambudvīpa*". For details of the activities of the Buddhists here, the account given by Hsuan-Tsang, who both taught and studied there, is most useful. Under its chief teacher, Pandita Śīlabhadra, the teaching at Nalanda was not confined to Buddhism but diversified to cover the Vedas, Hindu philosophy, medicine and also astronomy (for which there was an observatory). The monastery had large endowments and received gifts from many persons including King Harsha. The number of students at Nalanda was about 10,000 at the time of Chinese pilgrim's visit. After the Guptas and the Vardhanas, the Pala Kings of Bengal were the chief patrons of Nalanda. Vajrayana Buddhism with its tantric rites developed at Nalanda most vigorously during the regime of the Palas.

Students and visitors and scholars from Korea, China and Java and other countries made pilgrimages to Nalanda. Maharaja Balaputra Deva, King of Suvarṇadvīpa built at Nalanda a monastery which was "the assembly of monks of various good qualities". The library of manuscripts at Nalanda was another great attraction for scholars from abroad who came to copy them. The monks also maintained hospitals and poor homes.

Nalanda was robbed and destroyed, its library burnt and its monks, along with those of several other monasteries in Bihar, were put to sword by the Muslim invaders in the 12th century A.D. During the recent archaeological excavations evidence of the fire which destroyed the buildings, namely thick layers of ashes, was quite conspicuous all over the site. A few of the monks and learned men who escaped slaughter found shelter in Nepal and Tibet. But the great university of Nalanda disappeared for ever. Excavations showed the remnants of massive entrance towers, fortifications surrounding the campus and, within the walls, remnants of gigantic temples, laboratories, monasteries, which were probably three or four storeys high.



Among the great teachers of Nalanda, many of whom are well known and remembered even now, were (1) Nagarjuna, (2) Vasubandhu, (3) Dharmapala who hailed from Kanchipuram, (4) Dinnaga and (5) Dharmakirti both of whom were great logicians, (6) Silabhadra, a Brahmin of Eastern India who succeeded Dharmapala as the President of Nalanda University and (7) Padmasambhava, son of king Udayana who went from Nalanda to Tibet and there became so highly respected as to be deified and worshipped.

### **Taxila.**

At the time of the Buddha, the most famous centres of learning in India were Takshasila (Taxila as the Greeks called it) and Kasi (Banaras). While Kasi specialised in religious and philosophical studies, Takshasila laid more emphasis on the secular arts, such as law, medicine, the science of weapons, etc. The Jataka stories speak of several young men from far-off Magadha and Kasi who went to Taxila for specialised studies. Jivaka, the great physician of King Ajatasatru of Magadha, who was physician also to the Buddha was one of the most famous students of Taxila. Other great alumni of Taxila were Panini (the Grammarian), Caraka (physician), and Chandragupta's minister, Kautilya, who was born at Taxila. Fertile and well watered, Taxila was a rich and prosperous area. It was actually on the important trade route between India and Central and Western Asia.

Though Taxila was famous all over India even as early as the 6th century B.C., very little is known of its history till the time of Alexander's invasion. The Greek historians tell us of king Omphis (Ambhi) who ruled at Taxila at the beginning of the 4th century B.C. This Ambhi is the first royal traitor known to Indian history, who to advance his own interest, welcomed the foreign invader to desecrate Indian soil. With the message of welcome, Ambhi sent to Alexander valuable gifts which included 65 elephants, 3,000 bulls and a very large number of sheep of the best breed. The Macedonian rule of Taxila did not last long as Chandragupta won back the Punjab and Sind from the Greeks. Two things which he saw in India impressed Alexander, the heroism of the men and women of India and the supreme contempt of worldly power and pomp of the Indian ascetics whom he saw at Taxila.

For a short period Asoka was the viceroy of his father Bindusara at Taxila. He was obviously responsible for the development of Taxila as a centre of Buddhism and also for the construction of the Dharmarajika and the Kunala stupas, two of the largest of the numerous stupas that studded the periphery of the city. After the break up of the Mauryan power, the Sakas, the Bactrians, the Parthians and the Kushans became overlords of Taxila and under each of these, the city and its Buddhist, Hindu and Zoroastrian religious institutions flourished. Fa-Hien during his visit to Taxila in 400 A.D. found the Buddhist establishments at the height of their prosperity but tragedy overtook the whole country



when the barbarian White Huns began their invasion in 455 A.D. The whole country was devastated, robbed and burnt. Taxila never again recovered. Hsuan-Tsang in the 7th century A.D. saw the ruins of the monasteries.

At the beginning of the present century, Marshall explored the mounds in the neighbourhood of the modern village of Taxila near Rawalpindi. The long series of excavations which he conducted revealed three periods of the growth of the city of ancient Taxila; the 5th century B.C. city at Bhir Mound which was probably the city where Asoka had his headquarters; the 2nd century B.C. city at Sirkap with buildings of the Bactrian, Saka and Parthian periods; and thirdly the Kushan city of Sirkush. Hellenic and Persian influence was very strong at Sirkap. In fact the Saka palace at Taxila was planned on the lines of the Assyrian palace of Mesopotamia and the Zoroastrian Fire Temple was wholly Hellenic in style. Outside the city area are the ruins of several monasteries, most of them large, and also several stupas, large and small. The ruins of the Dharmarajika stupa and monastery complex are still so impressive that one is made to feel that this area was the centre of the academic activities of the ancient city. Another interesting thing about Taxila is the story that St. Thomas, the apostle, paid a visit to the Parthian king, Gondophares, of Taxila in the year 44 A.D.

### BUDDHISM IN TAMIL-NAD.

Summarised from Sri T. N. Ramachandran's work\* by Kumari R. Vanaja.

The earliest inscriptions we have in the Tamil country, belong to the third century B.C. They are written in Brahmi characters of the time, on the walls of the natural caverns in the Tamil districts of Madura, Ramnad and Tirunelveli. They are of considerable interest not only to antiquarians, but also to students of South Indian Buddhism. There are references, in almost all these inscriptions, which are of a Buddhist nature. One inscription has a reference to a *Ceyo Pali* or a *Chailya* cave. Many others have references to Yakshas and Yakshis. At Kalugumalai in Madura district there is an inscription which records the fact that the caves were excavated for a relic-chamber at the instance of a "glorious chief Sri Yaksha." At Arittapatti in the Melur taluk of the Madura district is another inscription which says that the Yakshasiti the daughter of a citizen of Velladi caused a cave to be cut for the benefit of the Bhikshus. The inscription reads as follows:

காணிர நோதா சிறி யகரு சாண தாரிதான் கொடுபிதோன் வெள் அண்ட நிகாம  
கொள் அண்ட நிகாமதற்கோ போதிர்  
யகசிதி காரிதவ சாதன பிநாக கொடுபிதோன்.  
தேன் கொடியேன்

The inscription means this, "Yakshasiti, the daughter of a citizen of Velladi caused to be made (this cave) and Sattan Pinakan had it cut". The words Yaksha and Yakasiti, found in these inscriptions are clearly of a Buddhist nature.

\* *Nagapattinam and other Buddhist Bronzes in the Madras Museum.*





We have learnt, from these Brahmi inscriptions which palaeographically belong to about 3rd century B.C. that Buddhism had come into Tamil country even then. It was to Asoka, the Mauryan monarch, and his son Mahinda that the introduction of Buddhism into the South may be attributed. Epigraphical evidence seems to confirm this statement. In his Rock-Edict No. 3, Asoka says that his Dharma Vijaya prevailed in the border kingdoms of the Choda (Colas), Pada (Pandayas) and as far as Tambapanni (Ceylon). But it was his son Mahinda who was responsible for the introduction of Buddhism in Tamilnad. In this task, he was helped by Maha-Aritta, a nephew of the Ceylonese king Tissa. Mahinda is said to have erected seven viharas at Kaveripattinam while he was on his way to Ceylon.

Some scholars are of the opinion that Aritta or Maha-Aritta might have lived in the caves of the village of Arittapatti in Madura. But the similarity in the names of the monk and the place might have been only accidental. Arittapatti was undoubtedly a centre of Buddhism but whether Aritta lived there is doubtful.

The earliest Tamil literature of the Sangam age has very few references to Buddhism. The names of few poets like Ilam-Bodiyar (1st or 2nd century A.D.) and Sangavarunar point out that they were Buddhists. There are no specific references in their works to Buddhism. Yet Buddhism must have prevailed here before the 1st or 2nd century A.D.

A golden age of Buddhism, from the 2nd to the 7th century A.D., can be pictured from the Tamil classical works and the works of Buddhist teachers of this period. Kanchipuram, Puhar or Kaveripattinam were famous centres of Buddhism. During this period, Bhikshus and Bhikshunis travelled throughout the land and propagated Buddhism. The Tamil classical works like the Silappadikaram, Manimekalai, Valaiyapati, Kundalakesi, the Jaina work Nilakesi and the Hindu works Devaram and Nalayiraprabandam and Periyapuranam contain references to Buddhism of this period.

The Silappadikaram is very reticent on Buddhism. The only clear reference to Buddhism can be found in Kovalan's narration of his dream to the Brahman Madalan (canto XV) in which Kovalan says that he saw Madhavi surrendering her daughter Manimekalai to a life of asceticism. A reference to an Arivor Palli in Puhar is probably to Buddhist shrine. The Manimekalai on the other hand is a great Tamil work on Buddhism, written by Sittalai Sattanar in the 2nd century A.D. It glorifies Buddhism at the expense of Jainism. The story of the conversion and activities of Manimekalai as Bhikshuni is narrated in this epic poem. It is said that Aravana Adigal, a Buddhist teacher of repute, converted Manimekalai and helped her in her mission of helping humanity. Aravana Adigal was the head of the Sangha of Puhar. When Puhar was engulfed by sea he went to Vanji, the Chera capital. He attained Nirvana at Kanchipuram.

The Manimekalai refers to the erection of a chaitya at Vanji in the time of Imaya Varamban Nedunjeraladan, by an ancestor of the hero of Silappadikaram. This chaitya



and other Buddhist shrines were in a flourishing condition when Aravana Adigal visited the Chera capital along with Manimekalai. These references are evidences on the continuity of Buddhist traditions in south India. The epic also refers to the erection of Buddhist viharas by two Cola kings one of which was built by Ilangilli.

Mahayana form of Buddhism seems to have become popular in the 4th century A.D. The Tamil poet Sanghamitra who lived in the Cola country at this time is said to have converted the Ceylonese king to Mahayana, and destroyed the Mahavihara the seat of Hinayana sect in Ceylon, with the help of the king's son Mahasena. The Abhayagiri vihara was enlarged and made the centre of the Mahayana form of Buddhism.

Kundalakesi, one of the five great *kavyas* in Tamil literature, treats at considerable length the story of a *Vaisya* girl by name Kundalakesi and her love for a daring robber who was condemned to death, and their ultimate salvation through the Buddha. The period during which this *kavya* was written is still a matter for speculation. While it has been attributed to one Nadagutta of the 4th century A.D., only quotations from this great *kavya* are available to us. The *Vimbasarakathai* records the Buddha's birth in the Lumbinivana while the *Tiruppadigam* is in praise of the Buddha and his acts. References to Buddha are also found in later works like *Virasoliyam*.

From the accounts in these works we get a fairly clear idea of the state of Buddhism in the South.

In the interval between the close of Sangam age and the rise of the early Pandiyas and Pallavas, practically the whole of South India was overrun by the Kalabhraas, about whom we have very little information. The period of Kalabhra rule seems to have been favourable to Buddhism. Buddhadatta or Thera Buddhadatta as he is called lived during this time (5th century A.D.). He was patronised by Acyutavikkanta, of the Kalabhra ruler of the Cola-nadu. Under the patronage of this ruler, Buddhadatta wrote many books. In his book *Vinayaviniccaya*, he says that due to the patronage of this king he was able to compose this work. There is also another reference in one of his books to a Buddhist Palli at Bhutamangalam. In the *Abhidhammavata*, he gives a glowing account of Kaveripattinam and its monasteries. It is also said that he held charge of the monasteries at Kaveripattinam, Urugapuram, Bhutamangalam and Kanchipuram and the Mahavihara at Ceylon. While he was at Ceylon, he composed many Buddhist works such as *Uttaraviniccaya*, *Ruparupa Vibhaga*, *Jinalankara*, etc.

Bodhi-Dharma, the founder of *dhyaana-marga* lived early in the 6th century A.D. He was a prince of Kanchipuram. It was he who was responsible for introducing this faith in China from where it spread to Japan. This faith was called "Chan" by the Chinese and "Zen" by the Japanese. The Chinese called him *Tamo* and included him in their list of twenty-eight apostles and erected temples for him as the Japanese did later.



From Tibetan sources we hear that the great scholar and philosopher Dinnaga was born in Simhaviktra a suburb of Kanchipuram. He was a follower of Hinayana Buddhism. The *Nyayapravesa* and *Nyayadvara* were two works written by Dinnaga. The great Acharya Dhammapala, who became the head of the Nalanda University later, studied under him as a young scholar. The Vijnanavada school was probably the popular sect during this time. Dinnaga was a follower of this school.

Buddhaghosa of Magadha, poet, philosopher and commentator and Thera Buddhadatta were patronised by Samghapala, a king of Kanchipuram. The evidence from his works and those of Thera Buddhadatta clearly points out that Kanchipuram, Kaveripattinam and Madurai were three great centres of Pali Buddhism in the 5th century A.D. The *Gandhavamsa*, a later work refers to twenty other teachers who were at Kanchipuram and wrote books in Pali. It refers to Ananda (5th—6th century A.D.), author of *Mulatika* and *Abhidhammatthakatha* and a Dhammapala, a native of Tambarattha in Tirunelveli district. The *Gandhavamsa* adds that this Dhammapala became the head of a Buddhist monastery of Bhataraditta vihara at Kanchipuram and was the author of many commentaries on Buddhist texts.

In the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. Buddhism had a strong opposition from Saivism. The form of Buddhism followed during this period was Tantric, the chief schools of which were the Vajrayana, Tantrayana and Mantrayana. Buddhanandi and Sariputra, two Buddhist scholars were defeated in a theological controversy by Sambandar, the Saiva saint during this time. Vajrabodhi, a scholar of the Pandya country was also a follower of Vajrayana, and is credited with the translation of many Buddhist works into Chinese during this period.

From the 7th to the 10th century A.D., the Pandyas and the Pallavas were powerful in the Tamil country. Epigraphic and literary evidences, both foreign and indigenous bear testimony to the part played by Buddhism during this period. In the theological contest between Hinduism and Jainism, Buddhism seems to have resigned itself to a subordinate position.

Hsuan-Tsang gives us a graphic account of the state of Buddhism in these two kingdoms in the 7th century A.D. In the Pallava country, he says there were one hundred monasteries and 10,000 brethren. Kanchipuram which was as old a Buddhist centre as Buddha himself was the birth-place of the famous Dhammapala. In the Malakuta or Pandyan territory, he says that there were remains of many old monasteries and only a small number of brethren. He found ruins of the monastery built by Asoka and the palli erected by Mahinda near Madurai.

The importance of Nagapattinam as a chief Buddhist centre is confirmed by the observation of the Chinese traveller I-tsing. In the Pallava period, the Buddhist monasteries at



Nagapattinam were patronised by the kings, like Narasimhavarman II who built a Buddhist chapel there in 720 A.D. Nagapattinam continued to be a flourishing centre of Buddhism under the Colas. The larger and smaller Leiden copper-plate grants refer to the grants made by Rajaraja and Kulottunga I to this vihara at Nagapattinam which was begun by Chudamanivarman of the Sailendra dynasty of Sri Vijaya (Sumatra, Java and Malaya) and completed by Maravijayottungavarman who named it after his father.

The following is an extract from the Larger Leiden Grant of Rajaraja I (lines 73-86) :--

७५. ... .. राजराजो राजकेसरी ।  
 ७६. वग्मां स्वसाम्राज्ये वर्षे एकं विंशतितमे निखिलं धरणिं तिरुवायमाने क्ष ।  
 ७७. त्रिविंशत्यसि वलनाहुनास्त्रि महति जलपदनिवाहे पट्टनक्कुरर नास्त्रि जनप ।  
 ७८. देवनेकसुर सदनं सलप्ररामानिरामेविधि सौधं राजमाने ना-  
 ७९. गीपट्टने निजमति विभवं विजितसुरगुण्णा बुधजन कमलवनमरीचिमाति आ ।  
 ८०. धिजन कल्यपादयेन शैलेन्द्रवंश संभूतेन श्रीविषयाधिपति-  
 ८१. ना कटाहाविषयामातन्कता मकरध्वजेनाधिगतं सबलं राजविद्यस्व चूला-  
 ८२. मणिवर्मणः पुत्रेण श्रीमाराविजयोत्तुंगवर्मणा स्वपितुर्नाम्ना निर्मापिते भव-  
 ८३. रीकृतं कनकगिरी समुन्नति विभवं अतिरमणीयव्यूहमणि वर्मणस्य विद्मरं अट्टि-  
 ८४. सते बुद्धाय तस्मिन्नेव धनपदनिवाहे पट्टनक्कुररनास्त्रि जनप-  
 ८५. दे करिणी परिक्रमणं विम्वष्टसीमां चतुष्टयं अलौकिकलाभि  
 ८६. धानं ग्रामनवाप ॥

Translation :

" (73-86) He, this Rajakesarivarman Rajaraja, who had seen the other shore of the ocean of the collection of all sciences, whose foot-stool was made yellow by the cluster of rays (emanating) from many a gem set on the borders of the beautiful gold diadems worn by the entire circle of kings, gave, in the twenty-first year of his universal sovereignty to the Buddha residing in the surpassingly beautiful Chulamanivarman-vihara, of (such) high loftiness (as had) belittled the Kanakagiri (i.e. Meru), which had been built—in the name of his father, by the glorious Maravijayottungavarman, who, by the greatness of his wisdom, had conquered the teacher of the gods, who was the sun to the lotus-forest (viz) the learned men, who was the Kalpa-tree to supplicants, who was born in the Sailendra family, who was the lord of the Sri-Vishaya (country), who was conducting the rule of Kataha, who had the Makara crest, (and) who was the son of Chulamanivarman that had mastered all statecraft—at Nagipattana, delightful (on account of) many a temple, rest-house, water-shed and pleasure garden and brilliant with arrays of various kinds of mansions, (situated) in the division called Pattanakurra (included) in the big group of districts named Kshatriyasikhamani-valanadu, which was the forehead-mark of the whole earth, the village named





Anaimangalam (which had its four boundaries defined by the circumambulation of the female elephant and (which was situated) in the division called Pattana-kurra (included) in the same group of districts (as had been named above)."

In the 10th century Buddhism was a flourishing religion in a few places. A Pandyan ruler Rajasimha II established many *palliccandams* or Buddha and Jaina endowments. In the West Coast the Srimulavasa Buddha temple had become famous. In 868 A.D. this temple received a large grant of land from Vikramaditya Varaguna, who was a ruler of the territory between Travancore and Tirunelveli.

*Virasoliyam*, the Tamil work on grammar was composed during the 11th century A.D. by Buddhmitra, at the request of Virarajendra Cola. There are a few references to Buddhism in this work.

The Cola Theras, Buddhmitra and Mahakasyapa, two scholars from South India, were responsible for the composition of two works *Uttodaya* and *Namarupapariccheda* at Ceylon by Ceylonese monks in the 12th century A.D. The Talaing records of Kalyani near Pegu of King Dhammazedi gives a list of Buddhist acharyas of South India, Kaccayana, author of the first Pali grammar, Buddhavira, and Anuruddha. Anuruddha, during the 12th century A.D., became the head of the Mulasomavihara at Kanchipuram and composed many works like *Abhidhammatthasangaha*, *Paramartha-Viniccaya* and *Namarupapariccheda*. King Dhammazedi's inscription also refers to the mission of Chapala and return home with two learned monks Ananda Thera and Rahula Thera of Kanchi. Ananda Thera became the head of the Buddhist church later.

In the 13th century A.D. Dharmakirti another celebrated Buddhist scholar went to Ceylon and organised a conference of Buddhist there. He is attributed with the two works, *Dathavamsa* and *Culavamsa*.

Some of the latest references to Buddhism in South Indian epigraphy belong to the thirteenth century, when Sariputra Pandita of the Sangham is mentioned in a Pandyan inscription and a Buddhapalli is referred to in a record of Madhurantaka Pottapichola from Kanchipuram. The Javanese poem, the *Nagarakelagama* of the 14th century contains a reference to Kanchipuram and a Buddhist monk by name Buddhaditya who is said to have been celebrating the achievements of the contemporaneous ruler of the Majapahit empire. Buddhaditya is credited with the composition of a *bhagavati* similar to a *prastuti* while he was residing in the Sad-Vihara at Kanchipuram.

Until the 14th century A.D. Buddhism was flourishing not only in Tamilnad but also in Ceylon and Burma. This was due mainly to the efforts of Buddhist teachers from the South who travelled to distant lands and propagated Buddhism there.



With the spread of Jainism and the revival of Hinduism in the South, Buddhism began to decline. A schism had appeared in Buddhism. Sub-sects like the Vajrayana, Mantrayana and Tantrayana were later developments and their tantric nature and other tantric beliefs made them unpopular. The rigorous monastic life began to disappear from the 14th century onwards and monks became more worldly. On the other hand the rival religions took this opportunity and influenced their royal patrons to do away with the evils in Buddhism. The Saiva and the Vaishnava teachers began to give strong opposition to Buddhist scholars who were defeated in theological discussions by Saiva saints like Sambandar and Manikkavachakar. But even at this time, the city of Nagapattinam was a flourishing centre of Buddhism and the persecuted Buddhists began to take shelter there. Ceylon and Burma, which were Buddhist countries also gave shelter to them. The Buddhists who remained in the South were gradually converted and became Hindus. Until the 16th century some Buddhists stayed on at Nagapattinam. The subsequent history of Buddhism in Tamilnad cannot be reconstructed.

### BUDDHIST STUPAS

By P. R. Srinivasan, Curator for Art and Archaeology, Madras Museum.

"Glorious in the beginning, glorious in the middle and glorious in its end" was his new faith according to the Buddha's own estimate of his religion. Judging from the artistic legacy it has left behind, it will be equally true to say that the religion was "beautiful in the beginning, beautiful in the middle and beautiful in its end". It cannot be otherwise. The very sounds of the words *maitri* and *karuna*, the substance of which distinguish this religion from others bring peace and tranquility to disturbed minds. The salvation that Buddhism held out was also of an abiding and exhilarating character. Essentially humane and satisfying to all, this religion could reach the last man in the society, its props being the society's foremost members, and so it gained predominance in India from its inception to about 1000 A.D. Catching the imagination of the people at large and attracting the best men of taste to its fold, Buddhism inspired "things of beauty that are a joy for ever". In a close race to pay homage to the Master of the Law of Good Men, the mind, the speech and the body of the devout vied with one another in producing works of everlasting interest to humanity and of surpassing beauty. As this religion was the first to come out in the open in order to share the fruits of immortality with all the beings of the world, it was also the first in showing its sincerity of purpose through concrete works of art. The contributions of Buddhism in the field of architecture, sculpture and painting are all too well known. The monuments of Sanchi, the frescoes of Ajanta and the sculptures of Amaravati are all



well known. Their influence on the arts of the neighbouring as well as other eastern countries has been significant. No less important is the fact that the traditions embodied in the art go back to very ancient times and they have been found to persist in the works of subsequent times. Notable contributions have been made to the tracing of these traditions both backward and forward and thus establishing their continuity and uniqueness by such indologists as Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy, Dr. Vogel and Dr. Foucher. Here it is proposed to notice briefly the distinctive contribution of the various regions of India and the neighbouring countries to the stupa architecture and to describe in some detail the few hitherto little known Buddhist images belonging to southernmost part of India, a great majority of them belonging to Tamil-Nad.

From the ancient literatures of India, we know that during and before the time of the Buddha there obtained the practice of offering worship at *chaityas* and *stupas*. The *chaityas* probably meant sacred trees and the *stupas* were those sepulchral monuments raised over the relics of great men such as emperors and saints. The Buddhists, along with the followers of other sects of India, continued this practice. But such monuments belonging to the period from the 6th century B.C. to the 3rd century B.C. have not come down to us except perhaps the ruins of the Piprahwa stupa which is said to date from the 4th century B.C. Only from the time of Asoka, *stupas* came to be built with stone. During his period the worship of sacred trees, called *chaitya trees*, was also prevalent, a practice which has survived to this day in India. In course of time *stupas* also came to be called as *chaityas*. In view of the fact that Buddhists who migrated from North India and settled in Andhradesa built huge *stupas* and called them *mahachaityas* and perpetuated their worship, they came to be distinguished as the *Chaityakas*. It may, however, be remembered that in the numerous bas-relief sculptures that the *stupas* of India were decorated with, there are representations of the worship of the tree side by side with representations of stupa worship.

Owing to the fact that from the time of Asoka, the *stupas* became more and more popular mainly due to the efforts of the members of the *Chaityaka* school, great care and patience and vast resources were spent in constructing huge *stupas*. Asoka is credited with having built 84,000 *stupas*. The *Dharmarajika* stupa at Sarnath and the stupa which forms the core of the famous Sanchi stupa are said to have been built in his time. It is said that the original Sanchi stupa was hemispherical in shape and that it had a wooden railing.

The various parts of a stupa as can be known from later *stupas* are the base, the dome, the small square superstructure called *harmika* enclosing an umbrella or two and the railing put up round the stupa at a distance leaving a passage for the purpose of circumambulation.

*Central Indian stupas*.—This norm is maintained by the Sanchi stupa, except for the feature that the great stupa is truncated. This is also the type of all the rock-cut stupas



found in the chaitya halls of the Western Ghats and of the small monolithic stupas found at Bojjanakonda in the Visakhapatnam district. In these cave stupas, usually there is no railing separately from the central structure, although in some examples the railing is also carved on the drum portion. In the stupa at Sanchi, the railing is provided with elaborate gateways at the cardinal points. The gateways are of the pillar-and-beam type. A peculiarity of the railing of the Sanchi stupas is that here it is only the gateways that are carved completely while the other parts of the railing are not at all carved but simple in their workmanship which is in imitation of wooden prototypes. In the case of the Bharhut stupa, the gateways are similar to those of the Sanchi stupa, but here the other parts of the railing are also carved.

Thus the special distinguishing feature of the central Indian stupas was the *torana* gateway.

*Andhra stupas.*—Next in point of time came the stupas of Amaravati, Jaggayyapeta and Nagarjunakonda. In these stupas, the drum or plinth portion is low, projecting a bit away from the central dome. This plinth has rectangular projections called *ayaka* platforms at the four cardinal points, on each of which are erected five tall pillars called *ayaka* pillars. Though there is the railing all right, here no *torana* gateways are present. Instead of the *torana* gateways, there are, at each of the entrances, two pillars with seated lion figures on them. It is not known why the *Sthapatis* (architects) of the South dispensed with *torana* gateways in these stupas. That they had some valid grounds for doing so is suggested by the fact that in several of the bas-reliefs from Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda, showing a palace or stupa, the *torana* of the Sanchi type is invariably found carved. In these stupas also the entire railing seems to have been carved, besides the huge carved tablets that were used to encase the stupas. Another interesting feature of the Andhra stupas, a feature which is best illustrated by the many stupas of Nagarjunakonda, is the hub-and-spoke method of interior construction, which looks like a wheel on plan and like an open umbrella in its vertical section. This combination of wheel and umbrella is unique and highly significant. The umbrella shape of the interior is suggestive of the princely status of the Buddha as well as his emperorship amongst the *yogis*. The wheel plan immediately suggests that it was the Buddha, the royal sage, that set the wheel of the Law of Good Men in motion for the first time. Perhaps the lions on the gateway pillars indicate that the Buddha was Sakyasimha. A great majority of the stupas of the Krishna valley are of this type except a few like the Bhattiprolu stupa which was of a solid brick construction.

*Gandharan stupas.*—The earlier stupas of North-Western India such as the Manikyala and the Dharmarajika are hemispherical in shape. The stupas of later times were built in the shape of several square tiers of diminishing dimensions topped by a tall elongated





cylindrical portion surmounted by a pole with a number of umbrellas arranged in a tapering fashion. The tiers of the plinth contain pilasters of Corinthian order. In these stupas, there is no *torana* gateway; nor the *ayaka* pillars. Interior construction is different from that of the Andhra stupas. So the stupas of this part are based on a quite different tradition probably on a local version of the text bearing on the architecture.

*Sarnath stupas.*—There are examples of early stupas at this place such as the Dharmarajika stupa which is said to have been built by Asoka. But the stupas built during later periods have high plinths bearing a tall and cylindrical structure in the place of the early hemispherical stupas. The best example of this class is the Dhamek stupa. No railing or *torana* gateways or *ayaka* pillars are found here.

A unique stupa dating from the 1st century B.C. is found at Nandangarh. It has a polygonal plinth of several terraces with recesses, a type of which the magnificent example is the stupa of Borobudur in Java.

*Ceylon stupas.*—The early stupas of Anuradhapura were also hemispherical. But here the dome rests on three circular terraces erected on a square plinth which has four stairways. There is also the *harmika* but the pointed ringed spire called 'tee' is a noteworthy feature. The most interesting feature met with in the Thuparama dagaba is its four circular rows of pillar. In the later dagabas such as the Ruwanweli there is the additional feature called in Ceylon as *Wahalkada*. This consists "of superimposed horizontal stone courses flanked by pillars decorated in a style recalling that of Sanchi *torana* posts".

The later dagabas of Polonnaruwa are of the hemispherical type but those like the Lankatilaka are of the "bubble" type.

*Burmese stupas.*—The stupas of Burma are not all of one type. There are some in the Indian style and others modelled on the Sinhalese stupas. But most of them have square terraced basement with small shrines at its corners. The domical portion gracefully merges with the 'tee' or 'hti'. In such stupas as the Mingalazedi (Pagan, 13th century), the dome has the appearance of the *sikhara* of North Indian temples, whereas in others like the modern Shwe Dagon (Rangoon) the dome is bell-shaped.

*Japanese stupas.*—Of the Buddhist monuments in Siam, Cambodia and Indonesia the famous one is the Borobudur of Java. It belongs to the 9th century A.D. As has been mentioned above its prototype is the Nandangarh stupa. The square basement of this structure bears four recessed square terraces over which are found three circular terraces crowned by a dome. The whole structure has the appearance of a *meru-yatra*.



## BUDDHIST IMAGES OF SOUTH INDIA.

By P. R. Srinivasan.

It was due to the noble urge of the devoted Buddhists who wanted to perpetuate the memory of the Master that there came into being stupas and chaitya halls of a variety of shapes and designs, the salient features of a few groups of which have been dealt with above. These structures were usually decorated with fine sculptures and paintings, which, as a rule depicted scenes from the life of the Buddha as well as scenes from the stories of his past lives (*Jatakas*). It must be said to the credit of the Buddhists that it was they who were responsible for making use of the various arts and crafts on a large scale in order to promote their faith, which incidentally resulted in the rapid development of the arts. Since almost all the earliest specimens of the various arts are Buddhist in character it may not be wrong to say that the Buddhists were also the first in this venture. As we have already dealt with the stupas, here we shall notice briefly the specimens of paintings and sculptures of Buddhism.

Earliest examples of painting of India are Buddhist in character and they occur in caves IX and X of Ajanta. They are said to belong to the second first centuries B.C. The art of painting was continued here and reached the height of its development a few centuries later. The later examples of paintings are found in caves Nos. I, XVI and XXVII of Ajanta. The perfected art of Ajanta of the fifth-sixth centuries, influenced the art of painting in Turkestan, China and Japan. These wonderful paintings have been studied and published by a number of competent authorities such as Griffiths, Lady Herringham, Yazdani and Nandalal Bose. It is not therefore necessary to repeat the same here.

As regards the Buddhist sculpture, the earliest examples are those belonging to such places as Bharhut, Sanchi, Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda. They range in date from the second century B.C. to the third century A.D. While the evolution of the style of painting was uniform on account of its being confined mostly to one particular locality, namely, Ajanta, the Buddhist sculptures show a variety of styles due to the different regions to which they belong. Nevertheless the subject-matter remains the same, the difference in treatment conveying to us the capacity of sculptors to deal with the same theme in a variety of ways without prejudice to its contents as prescribed in the texts. Thus it is easy to distinguish the works of one school or locality from those of another school and place. The development of Buddhist sculpture of North India can be traced from the specimens of the Bharhut stupa, through Sanchi and Mathura to the perfect examples of the art of the early Gupta period of about the 5th century A.D. In the South, however, the earliest specimens are those from Jaggayyapeta and the art was at its zenith in the 2nd century.



A.D. as exemplified by the beautiful bas-reliefs of Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda. There are also excellent publications on these sculptures as well as on the marvellous group of bas-relief of Borobudur of Java.

Besides these well-known examples of Buddhist sculpture, a number of interesting sculptures have been discovered during the past three or four decades in different parts of South India such as those occurring in the various Buddhist sites in Andhradesa and the large number of metal images of Nagapattinam in the Tanjore district. The former group has yet to be studied. The Nagapattinam Buddhist images have been studied and published by the Madras Museum<sup>1</sup>. Apart from these, a number of isolated specimens of sculpture representing mainly the Buddha and a few other Buddhist deities of great importance to the history of the religion in South India have been reported from different parts of South India. Although the style of these sculptures is the same as that of the contemporary Hindu and Jain sculptures, the existence of Buddhist icons ranging in date from the 7th to the 17th century A.D. in these parts, suggests clearly that there were the followers of Buddhism here till two centuries ago. The continuance of the religion here till a late period and till long after it disappeared in the North is rather significant in the religious history of South India. It amply bears out the tolerance of the people towards all faiths.

Here it may be noted that the reason for the continuance of this religion in South India was probably due to the fact that the Buddhists of this region were following the most orthodox form of the religion. This hypothesis is supported by the paucity of specimens of icons of various deities of the Mahayanist pantheon although there are a number of images of the Buddha. In view of the orthodoxy of the South Indian Buddhists who did not permit any of the excesses which characterised the later forms of Buddhism of North India, South India could accommodate the orthodox form of Buddhism longer. The few rare images of Mahayana Buddhist deities that occur here are not only very interesting iconographically and from the point of view of art, but also serve as a measure of the popularity of the schools of Buddhism which were responsible for their creation. Here it is proposed to notice, in some detail, such of the Buddhist images of South India as have not been adequately known. Since a great majority of them are images of the Buddha greater attention is paid here to the evolution of the Buddha image during the centuries.

*Earliest representations of the Buddha.*—Among the numerous specimens of bas-relief sculptures, about which so much has been written, are number of compositions containing the figure of the Buddha in a variety of postures and attitude. Usually in these panels the Buddha figure dominates the other figures of the composition. Already in these

<sup>1</sup> T. N. Ramachandran, *Nagapattinam and other Buddhist Bronzes in the Madras Museum*, Bulletin of the Government Museum, Madras, New Series, General Section, Vol. VII, No. 1.



representations of the Buddha his various distinguishing features are apparent. They include the protuberance on the head, the curly hair, the mark on the forehead, the drapery, the halo behind the head and the *padmasana*.

The hair is usually shown in curls except in the case of some Gandharan Buddhas and one or two of the Buddhas in the indigenous style, e.g., the Katra Buddha now in the Mathura Museum where the hair is shown tied into a top knot in a naturalistic fashion. The protuberance on the head of the Buddha which is called by the name of *ushnisha* is not much in evidence in the early examples. The forehead mark is actually not present in the early Buddha figures<sup>2</sup> from Mathura and in those of the bas-relief compositions from Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda and Goli. The drapery which is shown with bold lines suggesting heavy folds, in the early figures is said to have been due to the influence of Gandharan art. Similarly the halo behind the head is also said to be an imitation of the Gandharan halo. These features never remained static and show interesting development in the course of many centuries when the Buddha figure was repeatedly made for purposes of worship.

Another interesting thing to be noted in the Buddha images is that the representations of the Buddha occurring in the compositions are in a variety of postures as required by the story depicted by them. We may cite the following bas-reliefs as examples:—(1) the meeting of the Buddha with his son Rahula from Amaravati (Fig. 1), (2) the flight of the Buddha with Nanda from Nagarjunakonda (Fig. 2) and (3) the Buddha's visit to Yasodhara from Goli (Fig. 3). The figures of the Buddha in the round however are depicted in a limited number of postures, namely, either standing or seated or reclining. Of the standing figures, some may show their hands in *abhaya* pose and others in *varada* pose. The seated-figures of the Buddha are shown in a greater number of postures symbolising the important events in his life. There are seated Buddhas in the *bhūṣpaṣa mudra*, in the *dharma-cakra mudra*, and in the *dhyana mudra*. There are also rare representations of the Buddha in the *vyākhyana mudra*. Besides, there are Buddha figures in *abhaya mudra* also. But seated Buddhas in *varada mudra* have not been found yet. As regards the Buddha figures in the reclining posture, there is no variety in it and it represents the death of the Buddha.

All these forms of the Buddha appear to have become well established during the early centuries of the Christian era. Now that we are concerned with the Buddhist images of South India, we shall confine our attention to the examples from South India.

*Lakṣaṇa of a Buddha image.*—Before proceeding with the study of these, it will be useful to know what the canons of sculpture (*Silpa śāstras*), have to say about the making of such images, because it is well known that in India no sculpture, was ever done without

<sup>2</sup> A. K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 67.





a written authority behind it. While comparing the written description with actual representation and *vice versa*, the influence of one on the other will become apparent and their chronological sequence is easily known. But at the present moment we shall not attempt a comparison between a variety of versions of *śilpa* texts or other works bearing on Buddha images and a comparison of these with the available specimens. But here we propose to re-examine what has already been said by the eminent archaeologist Mr. T. A. Gopinatha Rao in his article on some Buddha images from Travancore.\*

"According to the *Brihat Samhita*, the Buddha should be represented as described in the following verse :—

पद्माकितकराजः प्रसन्नमूर्तिः सुनीचकेतव्य ।  
पद्मासनोपविष्टः स्तिवजगतो भवति बुद्धः ॥

—*Brihat-Samhita*, Chap. *Pratima-Lakshanam*, v. 44.

That is—

Like the father of the world (Brahma) the Buddha is (shown) seated on the *padma-sana*. His hands and feet are marked with lotus (design). He is tranquil and has very little hair (on the head).

This description is very simple and most of the seated images of the Buddha may be said to answer this verse correctly. The description of the Buddha given in the *Manusara* is fuller. It is as follows :—

"बौद्धस्य लक्षणं तस्यै सम्पत्तुविशिष्टम् ।  
जिनदेवास्यै युक्तं स्थानकं च विशेषतः ॥  
स्थानकं चासने वापि सिद्धासनादि संयुतम् ।  
अथानुसृत्यैव कल्पयितुं न शक्यते ॥  
पुनरेतु श्वेतवर्णं स्यात् विराट्स्थानं संयुतम् ।  
कम्बुज्यायताक्षं स्यात् तुंगघोणं स्थिताननम् ॥  
दीर्घबाहुं विराट्स्थानं वक्ष्येत्तु च सुन्दरम् ।  
मांसलायं सुषुप्तं लम्बोदरपूर्णकृतिः ॥  
२ समपादस्थानकं कुर्यात्सुवहस्तं सुवासनम् ।  
हिमवतं च दिनेवं च उष्णीषोऽग्न्युत्पलौलिङ्गम् ॥  
एवं तु स्थानकं कुर्यात्स्थानादि चयोरुक्तम् ।  
पीताम्बरधरं कुर्यात्स्थानके चासनेपि च ॥  
शीते वामभुजे चोर्ध्वं सार्धकं सदनं ... ॥

—Chap. 56, *Bauddha-lakshana-vidhanam*.

\* *Travancore Archaeological Series*, Vol. II, Pt. II, pp. 119 ff.



That is,

"The image of Buddha may be sculptured either as standing or seated upon a *simhasana* or other seats; when shown as seated upon a *simhasana* there should be, in addition to the *kalpaka* tree, the pipal (*asvattha*) tree shown in the sculpture.

"The figure of Buddha should be of white colour, with a broad smiling face, the ear-holes (which are to be pierced) hanging, having broad and long eyes, prominent nose, long arms, beautiful chest, slightly fatty limbs and a somewhat hanging belly. The image of Buddha should have only two eyes and a pair of arms; its head should possess the *ushnisha* (the hair on the scalp) which should be done up in the shape of *kirita*. In the case of the standing image, the legs must be placed straight. Whether seated or standing, the image must be clothed in yellow robes."

This long quotation may be permitted in view of the fact that the images of the Buddha that are described below are all found to be perfectly in consonance with the description given above, except for differences in minor details. It is however to be noted that the above passage does not say anything regarding the various poses of the images. Nor is there any mention made of the *urna*. Except for the mention of the word *ushnisha*, nothing is said about the manner in which it should be depicted in sculpture or painting. Similarly there is nothing specific mentioned about the number of clothes and the manner in which they should be worn on the body of the Buddha although their colour should be yellow.

As against this specification, we have images in a variety of postures, wearing as a rule three garments the upper cloth sometimes covering both the shoulders, with the mark on the forehead well defined, and with the protuberance on the head developing into a flame of fire. Perhaps these should not be taken as differences in practice as against the textual description but should be regarded owing to their invariable presence in the images as having been taken for granted by the authors of the texts.

We shall now examine the examples of sculpture of the Buddha and other Buddhist deities that have come to our notice in a chronological order. Such a study of these figures has been attempted to some extent by Mr. T. N. Ramachandran in his monograph on the Nagapattinam bronzes, already mentioned above.

*Early Buddha images of South India.*—Earliest Buddha images in the round belonging to South India are those from Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda. They date from about 200 A.D. Most of them are life-size figures although there are a few small figures like the one from Guntupalli.<sup>4</sup> The large ones should have been intended for installation in special shrines probably called Buddhaghara in the monastic establishments. That they were

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<sup>4</sup> A. K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, Fig. 137. He says that it is from Amaravati which is not correct.



so installed has been proved by the existence of such figures in one of the two apsidal structures that are usually found immediately after the entrance to the monasteries at Nagarjunakonda. Apart from the small figure and those occurring in the narrative panels mentioned above in which the drapery covers both the shoulders in the remaining examples, the drapery covers only the left shoulder and its folds are suggested by lines. The heavy lump of cloth below the knees is also another characteristic of these figures, which, as we shall see below persists in later examples also. The earliest of these large-sized standing figures of the Buddha may be the larger of the two Amaravati figures<sup>1</sup> which are now in the Madras Museum. About them Dr. Coomaraswamy wrote as follows :—

"The statues of Buddha in the round, which may date from the beginning of the 3rd century are magnificent and powerful creations, much more nearly of type Anuradhapura (Ceylon) than of the Mathura type. The type is severe, but the features are full, the body is anything but slender and the expression is at once aristocratic and benign".

Except for their hands which are missing these images retain other features such as the drapery and curly hair, *ushnisha* and *urna*. They help us greatly in a comparative study of such figures belonging to subsequent times. The smaller of the two figures is better preserved and its features are slightly more prominent than those of the larger figure. Hence it may belong to a slightly later period. The development of the details of this figure is conspicuous in its drapery, protuberance on the head, the forehead mark and the full lips. Another interesting factor to be noted in these figures is that they were also provided with a halo behind the head. Since it was made separately and fixed to the heads it has not come down with the figures. But that they had a halo is easily seen from the provision made for it on the back of the heads of these Buddhas (Fig. 4).

The torsos of the Buddha images from Nagarjunakonda, one of which is illustrated here (Fig. 5) and from Vidyadharapuram (Fig. 6) are akin to the second Amaravati Buddha. These may therefore belong to the same period, i.e. about the end of the 3rd century A.D. Unfortunately their heads are missing, making it difficult for us to state definitely anything about the various features of their heads such as the *ushnisha* and the *urna*, the dating of these being based mainly on the common style of workmanship of the draperies of these torsos and the second Amaravati figure. There is a special feature noticed in the Nagarjunakonda examples. It is the *padmasana* on which they stand. This is not seen either in the Amaravati figures or in the small figure from Guntupalli.

This fact definitely shows that from about the end of the third century A.D. iconography of Buddhist images began to assume a significance and importance and it became all important in the making of images of the pantheons of the other religions in the subsequent periods. Now it is easy to understand the description of the Buddha as

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 71, Figs. 128-129.



*padmasanopaviṣṭaḥ* (seated on *padmasana*) given in the *Bṛhat-Saṃhitā*, because by the time when the work was written the *padmasana* became a distinguishing feature of the Buddha as well as Brahma (*pitṛa jagataḥ*, i.e. like the father of the world). The Nagarjuna-konda figures are also 'powerful creations' and their postures, even in their present mutilated condition, suggest, unmistakably, the grandeur of their conception. The Vidyadhara-puram torso is somewhat slender and more graceful than the others.

It is necessary now to draw the attention of readers to a beautiful head of the Buddha, also from Vidyadhara-puram (Fig. 7). It has been noticed by us elsewhere<sup>6</sup>. Perhaps it belongs to the torso from the same place noted above. Despite its mutilated condition, when we compare this head with the head of the second Amaravati figure, some differences are seen between them. In this head the face is rather elongated, the lips are very pronounced, the eyes are full, which is accentuated by the deep incisions made to demarcate the eye-lids, the curls of hair are broad and the character of the face is serene rather than joyous or meditative. In view of the fact that its nose, ears, *urna* and the *ushnisha* are all broken, nothing more can be said about this finely modelled head. Perhaps the *ushnisha* and the *urna* were also pronounced in this head as much as they are in the second Amaravati figure or even more pronounced, as they ought to be, judging from the elongated face and the broad curls. If the latter assumption is true, which appears to us very likely, then this head should belong to a date later than that of the Amaravati figure. It must however be noted that even here the *ushnisha* could not have been shown otherwise than as a mere protuberance.

*Bronze Buddhas from Amaravati.*—The four bronze Buddha images of which the largest and best preserved is shown here (Fig. 8) which have been discovered at Amaravati in a very bad condition, have to be taken as belonging to a period not far removed from the above images. These have been dealt with in detail in a recent *Bulletin* of the Madras Museum<sup>7</sup> from which the following extract is taken :—

"No 77. *Buddha* (pl. XXII, 4). *Height* 43.5 cm. Standing. Right hand *varada*; no marks; left hand holding one end of his robe which covers the left shoulder leaving the right one bare. *Urna* mark absent. *Ushnisha* shows protuberance but the curls are worn and smooth; hence not clear.

"Type and workmanship similar to Buddhavani and Buddhapada image now in Boston. Like the Boston image dates from the 6th century A.D.

"No. 78. *Buddha* (pl. XXII, 2). *Height* 28.5 cm. Standing. Left foot broken and missing. To the right the portion beneath the chest and nearly up to the knee, is

<sup>6</sup> A. Aiyappan and P. R. Srinivasan, *Guide to Buddhist Antiquities in the Madras Museum*, p. 55.

<sup>7</sup> T. N. Ramachandran, *Nagapattinam and other Buddhist images in the Madras Government Museum* pp. 59-60.





broken and missing. Similarly a large part of the back is missing. The image is hollow. The Buddha's right hand is in *abhaya* without mark and the left hand holds one end of his upper robe which covers his left shoulder leaving the right one bare. The third *civara* is present. *Urna* mark absent. The cranial protuberance (*ushnisha*) is as in Gupta, Buddhapad, Boston specimens; the curls are small globules closely arranged.

"No. 79, *Buddha* (pl. XXII. fig. 3), *Height* 19 cm. Standing, headless, with left forearm and feet broken. Right hand is held in *vyakhyana mudra*. No mark. *Sanghati* covers the body leaving right shoulder bare and has wave-like lines and folds arranged as in Mathura, Amaravati, Gupta and Anuradhapura sculpture.

"No. 80. *Head of Buddha* (pl. XXII. fig. 1). *Height* 9 cm. From nen *ushnisha* showing the curls in the shape of globules. The eyes and *urna* in the forehead are inlaid with gold (clearly later interpolations).

"Head remarkably similar to Sultanganj Gupta Buddha. Dated 5th-6th century A.D."

According to the above study, the date of these figures is 5th-6th centuries A.D. Since no specimens of the art of bronzes belonging to earlier times have been discovered yet in South India, these bronzes are the earliest extant examples of the art. In these images may be seen further development of the various features of the Buddha image. The *ushnisha* has become almost a top-knot, the curls more prominent, lips thick and full, the face rounded and the eyes, at least in one of them set in with silver or gold. The drapery in one of them is shown with folds by means of the lines similar to those met with in the stone figures noticed above which suggests the continuity of the tradition. In the other images the drapery is without folds and in the style of the Buddha figures in stone and metal of the early Gupta period in North India. This feature at once suggests some sort of a connection in this field of activity between North and South India at that period. As regards the protuberance on the heads of these figures, it is still covered with hair and has not developed beyond that stage. In these metal images, the halo is conspicuous by its absence. Though the purpose of these images is not clear yet it may be conjectured that they were in all probability intended for private worship by the most important abbot of the *vihara* of the place, a necessity which might have arisen owing to a variety of reasons such as the development of *bhakti* movement amongst the Buddhists and the vast population of Buddhist monks of that place. The making of metal images for purposes of worship at that time shows unmistakably the great popularity of the religion amongst the people. Though the rulers of the time namely the Salankayanas, were themselves Hindus, they were obviously tolerating the Buddhists as well as the Jains. This state of affairs, in religious matters, continued unbroken for a long time afterwards.



*An interesting Buddha image from Kanchipuram.*—Usually all public and cultural activities centre round important towns and cities. It has been so in all countries and at all time. The various faiths of the people have also had the capitals of kingdoms as their chief centres. Consequently the vestiges of these faiths are found in large numbers in those capitals. Numerous instances may be cited to prove this, e.g., Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, Pataliputra and Mathura, Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda, Tanjore and Trivandrum. Kanchipuram belongs to this class of cities. It is well known that this city has been famous throughout the history of South India. Though it has been a seat of Hindu culture from a remote period, Buddhism and Jainism also had had their seats here. From the Tamil Sangam works like the *Manimekalai* of about the 2nd century A.D., it is known that there were Buddhist establishments such as *viharas* here. But actual remains of these very early monuments have not come down to us. During the subsequent periods also Buddhism was thriving here. This is known from the writings of Hsuan-Tsang who toured India in the first half of the 7th century A.D. Of Kanchi and its Buddhist establishments he wrote: "The region had a rich fertile soil; it abounded in fruits and flowers and yielded precious substances. The people were courageous, thoroughly trustworthy and public-spirited, and they esteemed great learning; in their written and spoken language they differed from 'Mid-India'. There were more than 100 Buddhist monasteries with above 10,000 Brethren, all of the Sthavira school. The Deva temples were 80, and the majority belonged to the Digambaras. This country had been frequently visited by the Buddha, and King Asoka had erected topes at the various spots where the Buddha had preached and admitted members into his order. The capital (Kanchipuram, of the Ta-lo-pi-tu or Dravida country) was the birth place of the Dharmapala Pisa, who was the eldest son of the high official of the city. . . . Not far from the south of the capital was a large monastery which was a rendezvous for the most eminent men of the country. It had an Asoka tope above 100 feet high, where the Buddha had once defeated Tirthakas by preaching, and had received many into his communion. Near it were traces of a sitting-place and exercise walk of the four Past-Buddhas."<sup>1</sup>

Although no Buddhist vestiges dating from the time of Asoka or belonging to the period ending with about the 6th century A.D. has been found at Kanchipuram, a number of images of the Buddha ranging in date from about the 7th century to the 14th century A.D. have been discovered here. They testify to the statement of the great Chinese traveller. Of all the Buddhist images one is very interesting and is illustrated here (Fig. 9). Mr. T. A. Gopinatha Rao, the discoverer of this image<sup>2</sup> considers it the "most remarkable" of the Buddhist figures he discovered at Kanchi in 1915; and his estimate is quite correct. He discovered it in the innermost *prakara* of the present Kamakshi Amman

<sup>1</sup> T. A. G. Rao, in his article on *Buddhist Vestiges in Kanchipuram* in *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. 44, p. 127, quoting from Watier's *Translations*, Vol. II, p. 236.



temple at Kanchi. It has since been removed to the Government Museum, Madras where it adorns the Buddhist sculpture gallery. Mr. Rao says : " The total height of the image is 7' 10". Its two hands are broken ; wherefore it is not possible to state definitely what they carried ; presumably the right hand was held in the *abhaya* pose and the left carried an alms-bowl. The nose is much worn ; otherwise the image is in an excellent state of preservation. The long flowing robes descending from the left hand and the folds of the same over the right thigh are exquisitely worked " .

That it is an early figure is apparent from the style of its workmanship which is similar in all respects to that of Buddha images dealt with above except for the size of this figure which, as stated above, is over life-size. Unfortunately it has suffered much ; but nevertheless it will never fail to impress any one by the grandeur of its conception and the boldness of its execution. It may be easily imagined that when it was intact and under workship in its own temple its sight would have been awe-inspiring, just as the huge *linga* in the Brihadisvara temple at Tanjore is now.

Mr. T. A. Gopinatha Rao has not assigned it to any period. From a comparison of the features of this magnificent figure with those of the bronze torso from Amaravati, it becomes evident that this is later than that which has been assigned to about the 6th century A.D. But the oval face, broad eyes and wide curls of hair remind us of its affinity, although distant to the head from Vidyadharapuram noted above. This proves the fact that traditions of art have a tendency to continue unbroken in the South. Though its features thus remind us of more ancient works, yet its style is quite akin to that of the sculptures of the early Pallava times. Such features of this figure as massiveness and boldness and the design of drapery are all done more or less in the same manner in which they are found executed especially in the huge Vishnu figures of about the 7th-8th centuries. Hence it will not be wide off the mark if this figure is attributed to the beginning of the 7th century A. D. The conditions of the various religious sects at Kanchipuram during this period can be known from a variety of literary works of Tamilnad of which the Kanchi ruler King Mahendrarman I's *Mattavilasa-prahasana* takes the first place. Though this small drama speaks of Buddhism in an ironical way, it proves beyond doubt the fact that there were Buddhists at Kanchipuram having their own temples. The circumstance that this figure was, as has been mentioned above, discovered in the innermost *prakara* of the Kamakshi temple in the town raises the question whether originally this temple was dedicated to this Buddha itself. Perhaps there was a Buddhist temple here dating from a period earlier than 600 A.D. There was probably more Buddhist temples like this in the neighbourhood. That there was definitely one in the vicinity of Ekamresvara temple is proved by the existence of a number of Buddhist images there. They are on stylistic grounds, to be dated to later periods, and are, therefore, dealt with in the proper chronological context below.



If this dating of the sculpture is accepted then the statement of Hsuan-Tsang given above does not seem to be exaggerated. Moreover this figure has to be considered then as the earliest known example of Buddhist sculpture of Tamilnad, as more ancient examples have not been met with so far. The importance of this figure is therefore manifold, namely, that it is a fine specimen of the art of sculpture of the early Pallava period; it is a landmark in the history of Buddhism in Tamilnad and it presupposes the existence of a very important and probably a big Buddhist temple dating from before 500 A.D. in the heart of Kanchipuram.

It is to be noted that even though the *ushnisha* of this figure is much worn, it is clear from what remains that it was done in the same old fashion of a protuberance covered with curls of hair. It does not appear to have had a halo unlike the images from Amaravati.

*Buddha images from near Trivandrum.—Marudurkulangarai Buddha.*—Here it is necessary to examine the beautiful seated Buddha from the village in the Karunagappalli taluk of the Quilon division of the former Travancore State. It is illustrated in Plate III of the *Travancore Archaeological Series*, Vol. II, Part II. The author Mr. T. A. G. Rao does not describe the figure fully. Nor has he assigned it to any particular period.

The image is in the *dhyana mudra* but the pedestal, which should have been *padmasana* is lost. As in the case of the Kanchipuram standing Buddha noted above, here also, the drapery is shown with lines suggesting the folds. The face is round and its other features also bear a distinctive affinity to the Kanchi Buddha. There is also a family resemblance between this figure and the seated figure from Anuradhapura (Ceylon) illustrated as Fig. 295 by Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy. He describes it as "in a severe and grand style related to that of the Amaravati images". He is inclined to assign this "well-known" seated Buddha from Anuradhapura to the fourth century A.D. with a query<sup>1</sup>. Although this date may be too early, it should belong to a date not later than 600 A.D.

Now if we compare the Travancore seated figure with the Anuradhapura figure they are found to agree in several details such as drapery, *ushnisha*, posture and facial expression. Particularly noteworthy is the protuberance on the head which is simple in this figure while it assumes more developed form in images of later times from this area itself, which are noticed below. Secondly the three garments prominently seen in the later examples are only faintly seen in this as they are in the Anuradhapura figure. For these reasons the image from Travancore may be assigned to the 7th-8th century A.D. if not earlier. When there is this concrete evidence of an early Buddha image, there can be little doubt as to the existence of Buddhism in this corner of India from still earlier times. This fact

<sup>1</sup> A. K. Coomaraswamy, *ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 250, description of Plate XCVIII.





goes to support the theory of the existence of a flourishing Buddhist temple called Sri Mulavasam which is referred to in the inscription on an image of Lokasvara (dated to *circa* 2nd century A.D.) discovered in Gandhara by Mr. A. Foucher <sup>11</sup>

*Karumadi Buddha.*—This is another figure illustrated in Plate I, Fig. 1 by Mr. T. A. G. Rao in the same journal. Mr. Rao says about this: "This is so well known to the Travancoreans as the Kuttan of the village of Karumadi. By the side of the public canal to the west of the Kamapuram temple, near Karumadi, there is the image of Kuttan made of black stone. Its left hand is broken and lost. Local tradition says that it was one of the many minor deities sent out from Chengannur for the destruction of Devanarayana the Brahmana king of Ambalapuzhai and that the presiding deity of Kamapuram caught hold of one of them and petrified and fixed him there. Another story regarding this image is that when Vilvamangala Svamiyar was passing along, a Pulaiyan (the low-caste man) polluted him by approaching him and the sage, in anger, is said to have cursed him to become a stone". Mr. Rao says further that it is a Buddha image which "is patent from the *ushnisha* and the *jeala* on its head and traces of the upper cloth passing over the chest. It is almost three feet in height and is seated in the *yogasana* posture."

From this long quotation we are able to know the importance and popularity which this figure enjoyed once. Although the illustration is not quite clear, the general tenor of workmanship of this is more developed than that of the Marudurkulangarai figure. On the basis of style this has to be assigned to a later date, i.e., about the end of the 8th century A.D. The well-formed arms, the beautifully modelled torso and the fine features of the face of this figure are in support of this dating as they are all characteristic features of the later Pallava sculptures.

A digression here regarding the *ushnisha* becomes necessary. Mr. T. A. G. Rao has mentioned that the image has *ushnisha* and *jeala* as noted above, which means that they are different. No doubt, *ushnisha* means according to the lexicon the hair on the scalp, a turban, the coping stone, etc. But this meaning should be applied only to other figures and structures but not to the Buddha figures. For, the word has also a special meaning namely a characteristic mark of the Buddha. Since the protuberance on the head of the Buddha was a special feature of his, *ushnisha* has been uniformly taken, in these figures, to mean this protuberance. Of course this same protuberance develops into a *jeala* (flame of fire) in the figures of later times owing to the influence of the later day Buddhist schools as will be shown below. But the reference to *ushnisha* in the passage from the *Manasara* quoted above put in the phrase <sup>12</sup> *ushnishajjeala maalikam* may mean only that the head is glorious with the *ushnisha* and the translation of the passage by Mr. Rao does not

<sup>11</sup> T. A. Gopinatha Rao, T.A.S. Vol. II, Pt. II, p. 117, where reference is given to A. Foucher's *Épigraphie Buddhique*, Pt. I, p. 105, Pl. IV, No. 5.

<sup>12</sup> See p. 65 above.



say anything about the *jwala* on the head. It may therefore be taken that the two terms *ushnisha* and *jwala* which Mr. Rao uses throughout in describing the Buddha images, are not referring to two independent details. Besides, the figure in question does not at all show any *jwala* on the head but has only a protuberance.

*The other three figures.*—There are three more images of the Buddha from Trivandrum noticed by Mr. Rao<sup>12</sup>. Of these the third one is headless. But its other features suggest that its face and head should have been similar to those of the other two figures. All these three are in a style which is definitely more developed than that of the Karumadi figure. This is apparent in the *ushnisha* itself. It is not shown as a simple protuberance but appears to have been added to the original protuberance. This feature is quite clear in the second figure. It must, however, be noted that this feature as seen in these figures, is definitely on the way to become a *jwala*, but has not yet become one. In view of their developed features these figures should be later than the Karumadi figure and may be assigned to early ninth century A.D. Their present order itself may be taken as the chronological order amongst themselves.

*Mahayana Buddhist images from Amaravati.*—Before continuing our notice of these Buddhist sculptures in the far south, it is necessary to refer to three remarkable granite sculptures from Amaravati consisting of a Buddha and two different Avalokitesvaras. For their style and workmanship are such as to date them between 800 and 900 A.D.

*Buddha*, height 2' 5" (Fig. 10). It is carved in alto-relievo and is fairly well preserved. The original block of stone is rounded at top which serves effectively the purpose of a *prabha* (aureole) for the figure. The bottom portion of the slab is fashioned like a *padmasan* on which the Buddha is seated in the *dhumisparsa mudra* (earth touching posture) which is suggested by the right hand of the figure being shown pointing down while the left hand is placed palm upwards on the lap on which the soles of the feet are brought together. There should have been the *trichivara* (the three pieces of cloth) on the figure but owing to weathering the drapery is not now seen. The remnants of it now visible suggest clearly that the workmanship of the cloth was not done in the style of the Amaravati and Kanchipuram sculptures where the lines predominate, but was done in the style of the biggest bronze Buddha image from Amaravati where the cloth is shown without any lines to suggest folds and so displayed in the body as to cling to it. In this feature will be found the deviation from the ancient tradition and which became the norm in the images of this class produced in the subsequent periods. There is the *trivali*, one of the *mahapurusha lakshanas*, on the neck. The ear-lobe is as usual extended. The face is round and the eyes are nearly closed. Unfortunately the nose is worn out marring the beauty of the figure. The *urna*

<sup>12</sup> T. A. G. Rao, *ibid.*, Pl. I, Fig. 1 and Pl. II, Figs. 1 and 2.



mark on the forehead is also not now present as it has been erased. As in the sculptures noticed above, here too, the curls are broad and they cover the *ushnisha* which has reached in this figure a stage where it is at its maximum height. This stage paved the way for transforming the simple protuberance into a beautiful flame of fire. The top of the *ushnisha* is done almost in the round and hence there is the illusion that it goes beyond the top curve of the block. Behind the head is carved a simple but beautiful oval halo. The limbs and the body are somewhat plump but the modelling is nevertheless perfect and proportionate. The facial features suggest a rare attitude of contemplation. The following are the noteworthy features of this fine Buddha image: (a) The *padmasana* which, as has been mentioned above, was adopted as the pedestal for the standing Buddhas also, from early times. (b) The *ushnisha* is neither in the ancient style nor has it been transformed into a flame; hence its evidence for dating is of a clinching nature suggesting a date of about the 8th-9th centuries A.D. for the image. For, it may be argued with sufficient reason that the introduction of flame in the place of the simple protuberance on the head of the figure was probably due to the great influence exerted by the Yogacara school of Buddhist philosophy. The absence of this feature from this figure and the presence of it in sculptures dating from a later period suggest that at that time this school of philosophy did not have any following in the Krishna valley.

*Simhanāda Avalokitesvara*, height 3' (Fig. 11).—It is also carved in high relief out of a slab of which the top is rounded. The figure is seated in the *maharajalīla* pose on couchant lion which, with its face turned upwards and its tail brought between the hind legs, is shown on *padmāsana*. The right leg is firmly placed on the back of the lion in a slanting position and on the knee of this leg rests the right arm the hand being shown in the *chīna-mudra*. The left leg is bent and placed across and its sole is shown facing front in a graceful manner. The left arm holds the stalk of a lotus and is placed on a *śa*-like figure which is again supported on a double-lotus. Below this is seen the continuation of the stalk with a smaller stalk bearing a bud. The bigger stalk held in the hand goes up and branches off into three at its end, the central branch showing the full-blown flower and the other two bearing a bud each. Above the central flower is shown a sword, a cognisance of the deity.

The lion, which is the characteristic of the deity is provided with a cloth on its back for the figure to sit on and is decorated with a string of bells at its hind part. The expression in the face of the lion is not at all terrifying but is one of utter helplessness and submission, a state to which even the wildest of the wild animals are brought down when they subserve divinities. The manner of execution of its mouth is highly suggestive of the fact that the lion is not merely helpless but it also roars a very mildly as we would see the lions of any circus company roaring when they are under the control of their master.



On the right of the figure is shown a trident the stem of which is entwined by a serpent. The prongs of the weapon are in the style of similar tridents found in the early Chalukyan sculptures of Badami as well as in some of the early Pallava sculptures, a feature which is also indicative of the age of the figure.

Coming to the figure proper, here also the lower garment does not have any lines and it closely clings to the legs. There is shown a waist-band or the *uttariya* (upper garment) itself wound round the waist with a beautiful bow arrangement in the middle in the place where in the sculptures of South India of later times a *kirtimukha* will be seen. The body of the figure is bare. There is also the *triculi* on the neck. There is no ear ornament. The face is round and its features partly obliterated by the weathering of the nose, chin and forehead. On the head is a high *jatamakuta* which is beautified by the display of the curls of *jatas* on either side of the *makuta*. Some *jatas* are also shown falling on the shoulders as is usually met with in sculptures of the early Pallava and early Chalukyan periods. On the front of the *jatamakuta* should have been shown a miniature figure of the Dhyani Buddha Amitabha which cannot however be made out here owing to the fact that this portion has also suffered weathering.

This figure is also plump but it is beautifully modelled. Its simplicity adds to its beauty. There is however a vast difference in expression between this figure and the Buddha image described above. Here the posture and facial features are suggestive of majesty coupled with great determination rather than spiritual contemplation. This highly self-confident posture of the figure becomes somewhat frightening by the presence of the lion, the trident and the *jatas*.

From the above mentioned details, it is clear enough that this figure represents Simhanada. Here it is worthwhile to quote in full the description of this figure by Mr. B. Bhat acharyya, the great authority on Buddhist Iconography.

"Four Sadhanas also are devoted to the worship of Simhanada, who is regarded by the Mahayanists as the curer of all diseases. He is one of the most popular forms of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara and his images are by no means rare in India. At Patan in Nepal, all the more important *viharas* have two images of Simhanada, either in stone or bronze, on either side of the staircase leading to the sanctum. He appears in many forms with very slight differences. The four Sadhanas alike describe him as follows :—

“आमानं सिंहनादं लोकेवरूपं शशवेद, . . . अलङ्कृतम्” ।

—*Sadhanamala*, A-35, C-23, N-25.

"The worshipper should conceive himself as Simhanada Lokesvara of white complexion, with three eyes, with the crown of chignon having no ornaments, clad in tiger-skin, mounted on a lion in the attitude of princely ease, seated and glowing like the moon. To his





right is the white trident entwined by a white serpent ; to his left is the lotus bowl full of fragrant flowers. From his left hand rises the (white) lotus on which is the fiery (white) sword.

"Generally, in the images of Simhanada, the bowl of flowers is absent and in very rare cases the trident also. Sometimes the trident is held in his right hand. The pose in which he sits is here called the *Maharajalila* pose, which is another name for the *Ardhaparyanka* attitude ; but in some representations, he may sit in the *Paryanka* attitude also, or is even found in a standing attitude. The lion, which is found in almost all the images, may also be absent in bronzes. The fact that Simhanada wears no ornaments is very important because this distinguishes him from some of the varieties of Manjusri. The artistic specimen of Simhanada discovered at Mahoba and described by Mr. K. N. Dikshit carries a rosary in his right hand. None of the Sadhanas in the Sadhanamala refers to the rosary, but some of the Tibetan specimens have it."<sup>14</sup>

From the above we know not only the iconographic details of Simhanada but also the variety of ways in which he is represented. The Amaravati Simhanada with which we are concerned here is perfectly in accord with the Sadhana quoted above. For instance, it has no ornaments and the flower vase is present. It does not have a *yajnopavita* either. The images<sup>15</sup> illustrated by Bhattacharyya have either a *kanthi* and *yajnopavita* or at least an *yajnopavita* which are not mentioned in the Sadhana. The famous Mahoba figure has in addition a rosary in its right hand, which as noted above, is also not mentioned in the Sadhanas. But this is also absent from the Amaravati figure.

From this it will be evident that the Amaravati figure is not only an exquisite specimen of sculpture of about the 9th century A.D. but is a rare representation correctly answering the *sadhana* relating to Simhanada. Can this strict adherence to the Sadhana suggest anything ? We may not be far wrong if we say that this representation is one of the few earliest of its class, made just at the time when Vajrayanism began to be popular not only in North India but also in the South.

Now if we compare this figure with the Mahoba figure, the differences between them would become apparent, which are probably due to the difference in age between them. The Mahoba figure being nearly two centuries later than the Amaravati one, it is comparatively more ornate. This feature coupled with the downward look of the figure does not compare favourably with the simplicity of workmanship and the truly majestic posture (*maharajalila*) of the Amaravati figure.

*Manjughosha*, height 3' (Fig. 12).—This figure too is carved in high relief in a slab of granite. Its top is rounded. As in the case of the Buddha figure of this group, here is

<sup>14</sup> B. Bhattacharyya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography*, pp. 25, 26.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, Pl. XX a & c.



also present an elliptical halo behind the head of the figure. It is seated on *padmāsana* in the *sukhāsana* posture in which the right leg hangs down while the left is bent and placed on the pedestal. To show that the right foot rests on a lotus flower the sculptor adopted the clever method of carving a lotus behind the toes of right foot. This design had not only relieved the otherwise bald pedestal but also added to the artistic excellence of the entire piece. This fact proves also the mastery of the sculptor in his profession, which becomes all the more striking when we look at the figure of Simhanada, described above, which is also in all probability a work by the same hand. In the latter there was no problem of tackling the pedestal because the pedestal has necessarily to be carved into the lion, the vehicle of Simhanada.

The figure wears a *karandamakuta*. On it is found a Buddha figure in the *bhūṣpārśva* attitude representing the Dhyani Buddha Akshobhya. In the ears are *rainakundalas*. A broad necklace and a garland of pearl (*mukta-hara*) adorn the neck. An ornament is also found on each shoulder, besides, the curly hair falling on it. Armlets and bangles are seen. A waist-band suggested by the designs on it to be gem-set, goes round the waist. The lower garment is shown in folds and its one end is shown in a lump at the centre. The right hand of the figure is in *chin mudra*, which may be taken to be an alternative for the *vyākhyāna mudra*. The left hand which holds the stalk of a flower, probably a lily, is placed on the left knee.

As in the previous two figures, the face of this figure is also nearly round. In spite of the fact that it has also suffered some amount of weathering, its features are fairly clear. Apparently the expression of the face is serene and it is quite in keeping with the *chin-mudra*. Like the other two figures this is also another beautiful specimen.

As regards its identification, the above mentioned details go to show that it probably represents Manjughosha a variety of Manju-ri, emanating from the Dhyani-Buddha Akshobhya. Mr. Bhattacharyya has the following to say about this deity:—

“He has golden complexion, rides the lion and is decked in all sorts of ornaments. He is two-armed and displays the *vyākhyāna mudra*, and to his left rises the lotus. He is sometimes accompanied by Yamari in the left and Sudhanakumara in the right. The Dhyana as given in one of the *Sūtrās* is given below:—

“.....मञ्जुश्रीरूपं आसीत् वज्रं . . . सुः ।”

—*Sadhanamala*, A-56-7, N-43, C-43.

“The worshipper should meditate in himself the form of Manjughosha who is seated on the lion; whose colour is golden yellow; who is decked in all ornaments; whose hands are engaged in forming the *Vyakhyana Mudra*; who has the *Uthpala* in his left side and bears the image of Akshobhya on the crown. To his right *Sadhanakumara* and to the left *Yamantaka* should be conceived, . . . .”



" Some of the Sadhanas mention that he should sit in *Lalitasana* on the back of a lion while others are silent about the particular pose " 18.

The image in question answers the details of the Sadhana except for a few features, namely, the attendant figures and the vehicle which are probably omitted. If the *chis mudra* of this figure can be said to stand for *vyakhyana mudra* as required by the *sadhana* and the bouquet of flowers on the left side can be said to represent the *utpala* of the *sadhana*, then the image may be taken to be a representation of Manjughosha. If the sculptor who made the Simhanada was the same who made this also, as we have presumed above, then it is difficult to explain why he should deviate from the *dhyana* in carving the latter figure whereas he had adhered scrupulously to the *dhyana* while carving the former. Anyway as no other identification seems plausible at present, the image may be tentatively identified as Manjughosha.

*Buddhist images from Tamilnad—Melayur Maitreya.*—A beautiful copper-gilt Buddhist figure (Fig. 13), was discovered in the village of Melayur in the Shiyali taluk of the Tanjore district. Mr. T. N. Ramachandran has identified this as a figure representing Maitreya. His description of the figure is as follows :—

" No. 56, (pl. XVIII, figs. 2 & 3). Height with pedestal 39.5 cm ; without 35 cm. Found as treasure-trove in Melayur village, Shiyali taluk, Tanjore district on 29th April 1927. Gold-plated figure popularly called 'copper-gilt'. Standing erect on a circular *padmasana*, the front part of which is cut with socket on its inside suggesting that this image was fixed on the top of a *prabha* belonging to some other bigger and central image during procession. This must have formed part of a group of processional images. Right hand broken, but showing *varada*; left hand broken. Face round reminding us of Javanese type. *urna* mark is seen (pl. XXX, 21). *Karandamakuta* low and rising in tiers, with stupa in front and other decorative designs on its resembling Javanese designs, *makara-kundalas* in the ears, hair behind arranged wig-like, *śiraśakṛa*, a broad necklace with pendants as in images from Java and Nalanda, waist girdle, a garland like *yajnopavita* thrown over the right arm as in Pallava sculptures, a long strand like ornament thrown *yajnopavita*-wise extending up to the feet, a thick undergarment with lines, tassels, loops and securing strings arranged in elegant knots, a belt with clasp showing a flower in the place of the usual *simhamukha* are some of the interesting details in this image warranting an earlier age for it and an easy comparison with the Javanese of Sailendra times, and Nalanda and Kurkihar types of the 9th century A.D. The stupa design on the *makuta* makes its identity as Maitreya certain. The image resembles two images, one from Nalanda bearing D.G.A.'s album No. 3355 and the other from Kurkihar bearing D.C.A.'s album No. 3789, and would appear to belong to the

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.



9th century A.D. This calls for intensive study of Buddhism in South India which would yield excellent results. The find of this image at Melayur near Tiruvali, the place of Tirumangai Alvar in the Shiyali taluk, which is about 30 miles from Nagapattinam along the sea coast, stands for the popularity of Buddhism outside Nagapattinam and shows that there were votaries of the Buddha even further north as there were further west (see above pp. 10-12)."

As Mr. Ramachandran says, this figure is not only a magnificent example of the art of bronzes of South India but also probably the earliest of all the Buddhist bronzes of Tamilnad so far known. Mr. Ramachandran assigns this to the 9th century A.D., i.e., late Pallava period. We may therefore take the date of this figure as not later than 850 A.D. but more probably as about 800 A.D. It will now be seen that this Maitreya figure is contemporary with the granite figures from Amaravati. That both in Andhradesa and in Tamilnad the earliest examples of images of the more developed Mahayana Buddhism are these which date only from about the end of the 8th century shows clearly that the influence of this form of Buddhism was not strong before that date. It is to be noted that this was the period when South India, including to some extent Andhradesa was witnessing the spread of the power of the Rashtrakutas who superseded the Badami Chalukyas. As some of the features of the Melayur Maitreya such as the *yajnopavita* passing over the arms are said to be due to the influence of the traditions of the early Chalukyan art, which were introduced into the countries wherever the Rashtrakuta power extended, the developed form of Buddhism according to which worship was to be offered to innumerable gods and goddesses of Buddhism, might have been transported into South India and Andhradesa through the Rashtrakuta agency. Anyway this figure is yet another landmark in the history of Buddhism as it is also a landmark in the history of bronze gilding in South India. Moreover in this figure may be noticed not only the various details of a full-fledged icon but also beautifully worked ornaments and garments that are characteristic of sculptures of the late Pallava period. Mr. Ramachandran has also suggested that this figure might have formed one of the group of figures which were used for taking out in procession on festive occasion.

*Earliest bronze Buddha with jwala on its head, from Nagapattinam.*—Of the three hundred and odd Buddhist bronzes discovered at Nagapattinam<sup>1</sup>, a majority are images of the Buddha. Amongst the Buddhas there are only a few dating from the early Chola period. But the image of standing Buddha (Fig. 14) which is the largest and most beautiful of all is iconographically a rare specimen. Mr. Ramachandran describes it as follows:—

"No. 24. (pl. V. No. 1) Height with pedestal 89 cm.; without pedestal 80 cm. *Narayakkara Street, Nagapattinam, in 1934.*—Standing on a circular *padmasana* (a real

<sup>1</sup> For details regarding the discovery, etc., see T. N. Ramachandran, *Nagapattinam and other Buddhist Bronzes in the Madras Museum*.





*padma*). Type similar to Amaravati, Goli and Sarnath Buddhas. Long robe thrown over the body leaving the right chest and arm bare. Right hand *abhaya*; left raised up in an attempt to hold the robe and both without any palm mark. The fingers are delicate and slender (*jalanguli*) suggesting smoothness at once gentle and soothing. Face oval with nose, lips, chin, eyes, forehead and ears strictly proportionate. Ear lobes slightly elongated more to indicate the convention than to subscribe to it and holes not bored. Forehead clean without any *urna* mark as is the case with earlier images. Hair in six rows of curls surmounted by a small flame-like *ushnisha* whose tiny appearance on the head is more to indicate the idea of gnosis (*jnana*) than the idea that the image was influenced by the convention.

"The *padmasana* has four holes intended to secure the image to a basic stand while the image is carried in procession. The huge size of the image and the holes suggest that the image was one that was used as an *utsava-vigraha* by the Buddhists at Nagapattinam.

"May be taken as the earliest, probably 10th century A.D. in point of time."

From the above it is clear that this image is of the early Chola period, and this may be dated to about 900 A.D. It has been somewhat influenced by traditions of art of the Far Eastern countries. Above all the most remarkable feature of this image is its *ushnisha* which is now completely transformed into a *jwala*.

A word or two about this new development may be necessary here. All along the *ushnisha* was a simple protuberance on the head. Here in this figure we see for the first time a small, beautiful, three-tongued flame of fire in its place. It is well known that in the history of Mahayana Buddhism there are three or four important stages of development. The introduction of the *yoga* system was one of the stages which dates from about 500 A.D. Although the discipline of the Yoga philosophy was accepted as a *sine qua non* by the early Yogacarins, it was vigorously followed only by the founders and the followers of Tantric Buddhism or Vajrayanism. As by the time these new developments took place, the Buddhist pantheon was also completely developed on the same lines as those of the Sakta and Saiva sects. Several iconographic details met with in the individual icons of the pantheons of these sects were also adopted by the Tantric Buddhists. Besides, as these Buddhists thought of the Buddha as the supreme *yogi* or emperor amongst the *yogis*, they began to conceive of the *yogic* powers (*yoga sakti*) called as *kundalini* of the Buddha as ascending up from the base of the vertebral column to the head out of which it bursts forth as a divine flame. This conception should have been popularised not only by means of rituals but also by depicting the Buddha with a *jwala* on the head. That this new feature was introduced first in the Buddha images produced in India under the influence of the Vajrayanists is easily found from the early bronze figures from Kurkihar and other places in North India.



and also by the figure in question from Nagapattinam. The sculptor who made this figure was not quite prepared for the innovation and was adding it merely because the people who commissioned him wanted it. This is apparent from the manner in which the small flame which is disproportionate to the large head on which it is perched, is done.

The drapery of the figure is also noteworthy. It is not shown with lines. It is done smoothly and this feature may be said to be at the stage of culmination of the same found in the biggest of the Amaravati bronzes noticed above. The fully developed *padmasana* is another significant development. It may have been a processional image.

Among the other important figures of the collection from Nagapattinam belonging to the end of the 10th century A.D., mention must be made also of three images, smaller standing Buddha<sup>18</sup> a *Simhanada* in the *maharajalila* pose<sup>19</sup> and Tara<sup>20</sup>, although the latter two are said to date from a slightly later period. But as works of art they are unsurpassed for their classical qualities in modelling and decoration.

Besides the above-mentioned figures, the collection from Nagapattinam includes a few beautiful but small images of Avalokitesvaras or Lokesvaras, Taras, Jambhalas, monks and votive stupas. These indicate the popularity of the Mahayana Buddhism in South India. However, the fact that there is paucity of a variety of Tantric forms of deities and that the available representations of the few deities are benign and are not of the terrific Tantric types, seems to suggest that it was the orthodox school that held sway here.

*Buddhist images from Kadri near Mangalore.* (The view expressed about these images is author's own).—When we deal with the Buddhist images of Nagapattinam, a great majority of which belong to the Chola period of South Indian history, a group of three Buddhist images in bronze discovered in the temple at Kadri near Mangalore requires to be noticed, not only because of the common style in which the figures of both the groups are done but also because of a definite paleographic evidence of the inscription on one of the images according to which the images were probably due to artists from the Chola country<sup>1</sup>. The temple is now dedicated to Siva and is called Manjunatha temple (Fig. 15). Their presence in the temple coupled with the fact that the Manjunatha is also a familiar name in Mahayana Buddhism for a form of Manjusri, proves that the temple should have been originally a Buddhist temple, its conversion into a Siva temple being the work of the later-day Saivites.

Here it is necessary to mention that except for this evidence and the evidence of the rock-cut caves nearby which may have been due to the Buddhists of this place, few other vestiges of Buddhism have been reported from South Kanara. But some scholars are

<sup>18</sup> T. N. Ramachandran, *ibid.*, Pl. V, Fig. 2.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, Pl. IX, Fig. 1.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, Pl. XI, Fig. 3.

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, for 1920-21, Pt I, Para. 4 (e), where three images are mentioned and wrongly identified as Jain figures. See also sketches of two of them reproduced in Pl. I, Fig. 1, and Pl. II Fig. 3, in the same report.



inclined to think that most of the temples dedicated to Sasta and the goddesses called Bhagavati might have been originally Buddhist in character, the famous Mangalambika temple of Mangalore and the more famous Mukambika temple near Coondapur being cited as having been originally Tara temples.<sup>22</sup>

Continuing our notice of the images, we have to say that their date is more or less definitely known from the inscription found on the pedestal of one of them. This pertains to the dedication of the image by a Buddhist king of the place who was ruling this area towards the close of the 10th century A.D.<sup>23</sup> The most interesting fact to be noted is that the inscription is written in the Grantha characters of the Chola period. While the great majority of the inscriptions of South Kanara and the surrounding areas are in early or late Kannada characters the occurrence of this inscription in the Grantha script should have some significance. We have elsewhere said that this was due to the fact that at the time when this figure was done or from a still earlier time than that, the Chola power extended to these areas also and in the wake of this extension of power, the Chola kings might have also introduced in these parts elements of the traditions of the various arts and crafts from their country<sup>24</sup>. When we take into account the style of these images which is not at all indigenous to the area but which is completely Chola in character, the conclusion is irresistible that the Chola conquerors were not merely content with spread of their power but arranged for settling in these areas master *śālapatis* from their home country. That the Grantha script was fairly well known in South Kanara—a fact which unmistakably proves the extension of the power of the Cholas to these parts—is known also from its employment in another interesting inscription from a place called Talangare although here the script is found used only in three or four lines at the beginning<sup>25</sup>. Of the three bronze images one represents the Buddha; the second image is a four-armed seated Lokeshvara; and the third is a unique one representing a three-headed and six-armed Lokeshvara. We shall describe them below *seriatim*.

*Buddha*, height 2 feet. The figure (*Frontispiece*) is seated in the *padmasana* fashion. Its right hand is held in *vajrkhyana mudra*, in which the Buddha is represented very rarely. The left hand is on the lap with palm facing upwards. The garments are shown as fine and without any suggestion of folds. The face is not completely round and the manner in which the nose and the lips are done suggests the influence of traditions of art of Far Eastern countries as in the case of several images from Nagapattinam. The head is covered with the curls of hair as usual. The *ushnisha* is a *jwala* which is larger and more boldly done than that of the

<sup>22</sup> B. A. Saletore, *History of Tuluva*.

<sup>23</sup> B. A. Saletore, *ibid.*, pp. 93-96 for details.

<sup>24</sup> P. R. Srinivasan, *Some interesting Antiquities from Tulu-Nad*, in *Transactions of the Archaeological Society of South India*, Vol. I, p. 84.

<sup>25</sup> N. Lakshminarayana Rao, *Talangare Inscription of Jayasimha* in *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXIX, part VII, No. 29, pp. 203-09.



large Nagapattinam standing Buddha noticed above. This development of the *ushnisha* shows that at the time when this image was made, the sculptor was not troubled by no such inhibition as was probably experienced by the sculptor who made the Nagapattinam image. If the latter is assignable to about 900 A.D., the Kadri Buddha should belong to a time two or three generations later, a date which is admirably corroborated by the inscription on the three-headed Lokasvara to be described below. Behind the image may be seen the stumps intended for the *prabhavali* which is missing here. This image was in all probability used as an *utseva bera* and taken out in procession on festival occasion as has been suggested in the case of the large bronzes from Nagapattinam.

As a piece of art, this image is unsurpassed for the beautiful modelling and fine proportions, which are characteristic of the early Chola sculpture. Besides, the facial expression is unmistakably vigorous and suggestive of masculine strength rather than feminine tenderness with which the Buddha images are usually endowed. In this respect this image compares favourably with some of the early Chola Dakshinamurti figures showing an austere and contemplative attitude.

The Buddha image is thus a magnificent example of its class, but the other two figures are more magnificent and interesting because of their special iconographic features as well as their being superb specimens of bronzes. Both of them bear on their crowns of matted hair (*jatamakuta*) a seated Buddha figure in the *dhyana mudra* representing the Dhyani Buddha Amitabha, which indicates that these figures are clearly his emanations. But their other details are so different from those of the varieties of figures of the respective groups of images so far published that their identification is fraught with difficulties. Yet in view of the fact that the sculptors belonging to different periods and places were doubtless guided not only by the dictates of the great teachers of the religion of the time and region but also by a local version of the iconographic texts, these figures showing a rare combination of details should be taken as having been done according to some *dhyanas* which, though not known to us from any source now available, should have been held as a sacred legacy by the sculptor who made them. It must therefore be said here that the view held by some modern scholars that deviations met with in the representations of the same theme or icon are due to the ignorance of the sculptor responsible for their creation, is baseless. On the contrary the divergences met with in them suggest not only the existence of a number of sub-schools of the same form of religion but also the full scope they provided for the sculptors to display their talents and originality in creating newer and newer forms. Though the two figures in question do not conform strictly to any of the *dhyanas* relating to the 108 varieties of Avalokitesvaras described in North Indian Sadhanamalas, yet one thing is certain about them that they are representations of Avalokitesvaras or Lokasvaras not only from their having the seated figure on their crowns but also from the fact





that the inscription on the larger of the two with three faces and six arms mentions that this is a figure of Lokeshvara. On the basis of this evidence these two figures are identified as follows :—

*Lokanatha*, height 3 feet. Of the two let us first take up the one with single face and four arms (Fig. 16). It is seated in *dhyana* posture. It wears finely worked *jalamukta* decorated with a *pushpavali* and a *manipatta* at its base and with a miniature figure of the Dhyani Buddha Amitabha in a circle in front. There are *makarakundalas* in the ears and a flower on their tops. Two *kanthis*, one of them of beads adorn its neck. Jewelled tassels and a single graceful curly lock of hair are beautifully carved on either shoulder. That the *yajnopavita* is of deer skin (*ajina yajnopavita*) is suggested by the deer head on it found over the left chest. *Keyuras* decorate the arms, *valayas* and *kankanas* the wrists and rings the fingers. The lower garment which reaches down to the ankles is beautifully worked. The ends of the *uttariya*, gracefully curved, are found flowing on either side of the waist. The waist-band of jewels has a finely wrought *simhamukha* clasp. The two upper hands are in the *kataka mudra*; the lower right hand is in *varada mudra* bearing in its palm probably a *ratna* or *mani*; and the lower left hand is in the *vyakhyana mudra*. The face is square and its features are suggestive of supreme tranquility.

As has already been said above, the identification of the figure is rather difficult as its details do not correspond to any of the *dhyanas* pertaining to Avalokitesvaras. Nevertheless it may be taken to answer the following *dhyana* which describes Lokanatha Avalokitesvara :—

“पूर्वेण कर्मयोगेन लोकनाथं शशिप्रभम् ।  
हीःकाराक्षरसंभूतं जटामकुटमण्डितम् ॥  
वज्रवर्मजटान्तःस्थं अक्षेरोगनाशनम् ।  
वरदं दक्षिणेदृष्टे वामे पद्मचरं तथा ।  
ललितलोचनं संस्पन्दु म सोम्यं प्रनामाम् ।”

—*Sadhanamala*, A-28, N-23.

That is :

“Following the same procedure as before, the worshipper should conceive himself as Lokanatha, resplendent like the moon, as springing from the sacred syllable ‘Hrih’ and wearing the crown of ohignon.

“He has within his matted hair the figure of Vajradharma (Amitabha); he is the destroyer of all diseases, exhibits the Varada Mudra in the right hand and carries the lotus in the left.

“He sits in the Lalita attitude, is peaceful and resplendent”<sup>16</sup>.

Mr. Bhattacharyya further says : “when represented, Lokanatha is generally alone and is occasionally accompanied by Tara and Hayagriva . . . . He may sit in three

<sup>16</sup> B. Bhattacharyya, *ibid.*, pp., 39, 40.



attitudes according to three different Sadhanas ; he may have the Lalita, the Paryanka or the Vajraparyanka attitudes. In the fourth, the Asana is not mentioned and it is for this reason that we get images of Lokanatha in Ardhaparyanka or even in a standing attitude as well \*.

It is clear from the above quotations that the figure of Lokanatha may sit in any one of the special attitudes, should have *varada mudra*, and *jatamakuta* with Amitabha on it and its features suggestive of *mahasamya* and *prabhasvara* ("peaceful and resplendent"). Although according to the *dhyana* the deity has two hands and should carry a lotus which are conspicuous by their absence here, in view of the fact that the other features of our figure satisfy the requirements of the *dhyana* relating to Lokanatha, we are venturing to identify this figure tentatively as a representation of that deity, presuming, while doing so, that the sculptor who produced this was guided by a competent authority in the matter. Now we shall pass on to the third bronze figure of this group. This is the biggest and most interesting of the three.

*Halakala Lokesvara*, height 4 feet. The figure (Fig. 17) has three faces and six arms. It is also seated in the *dhyana* posture on a *padmasana* over a *bhadrasana*. The *jatamakuta* is beautifully wrought and carries a miniature figure of the Dhyani Buddha Amitabha in front. The *pushpavali* and the *ratnapatta* are also found here as in the above figure. There are no *kundalas* in the ears, but there is a flower above each ear. Two beautifully patterned necklaces adorn the neck and a lock of hair is shown flowing gracefully on each shoulder. The *keyuras* on the arms are done in the form of an exquisite floral design with a small loop projecting from the outside of the arm. There are the other ornaments on the fore-arms and hands as seen in the above figure. The *yajnopavita* here is of *rastra* (cloth) and it is shown in an exceedingly realistic fashion with the knot on the left chest. The lower garment is also excellently worked with flower designs all over it. *Padasaras* and rings on toes are found. The waist-band here bears, not a *simhamukha* but only a clasp of floral design. The *bhadrasana* has the stumps intended to carry the aureole, and it has mouldings. On either end of the sunken portion of the *asana* is a panel. The panel on the left shows a seated figure in *anjali*(1) attended by a standing figure holding something in his left hand. To the left of the seated figure is a symbol which cannot be satisfactorily made out but may most probably be a representation of a sword kept erect on its hilt. The panel on the right shows again a seated figure in *anjali* with a standing attendant figure, probably a female. <sup>27</sup>

Although the stumps of the pedestal suggest a separate *prabha* having existed before, there is now only an extremely finely worked and ornate *prabhavali* which is kept behind the figure. This aureole has the usual flames on its outer edge and the tassels on its inner

\* These details are not seen in our illustration as a complete view of the image cannot be obtained in a camera. But they can be seen in the drawing reproduced on Pl. I, Fig. 1 of *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, for 1929-31.



edge. At its top is a small pointed-arched niche, above the knot made up of adjoined *makara* heads, containing another miniature figure of Amitabha. The lower ends of the *prabha* carved on a horizontal beam, show creeper designs of superb workmanship, the two ends of the beam showing each a *makara* head with gaping mouth from which juts out an angelic figure in the attitude of wonder (*vismaya*). Above each of these *makara* heads of the *prabha* is a standing figure of an attendant. Both are shown in the *tribhanga* pose. They have behind their heads a small oval *prabha* with the flames on its outer edge. They wear a *karandamakuta* and other ornaments. But while the figure on the left wears an *yajnopavita*, that on the right wears a *vaikaksha*. The hands are in *kataka* and *lola* poses, these being shown reversed in the figures.

Reverting to the main figure it has a third eye on the forehead of the central face. Possibly this feature is also to be found in the other two faces also. The smile that pervades the face is indicative of the ecstatic bliss of the deity. Of the three right hands, the lower hand is in *varada mudra* with a *ratna* or *mani* or probably the symbol for some significant object in the middle of the palm; the middle hand is in the *kataka mudra*; and the upper hand holds a lotus bud. The three left hands are in the following attitudes, namely the lower one is in the *vyakhyana mudra*, the middle one holds a lotus bud by its stalk and the upper hand is in *kataka mudra*.

The mastery of the sculptor is revealed by the beautiful modelling of the entire figure and it is wonderfully exemplified by the modelling of the torso. On the pedestal of this figure is the Grantha inscription mentioned above.

As regards the identification of this figure also, difficulty is experienced. For, this figure too does not answer in entirety, any *dhyanas* describing an Avalokitesvara. It is locally called as Brahma<sup>28</sup> which is clearly wrong as will be shown below.

Even supposing that this figure represents one of the several forms of other emanations of the Dhyani Buddhas such as Manjusri, this does not answer completely any of the *dhyanas* relating to them. It must however be stated that this figure cannot be taken to represent any such deity in view of the express mention made of this figure as Lokeshvara in the Sanskrit inscription in Grantha script caused to be engraved on it by the Alupa king Kundavarma, which reads as follows :—

“ श्रीकुन्दवर्मगुणवानल्लुपेन्द्रमहीपतिः ।  
पदारविन्दममो बालचन्द्रशिक्षामणिः ॥ ६ ॥  
लोकेश्वरस्य देवस्य प्रतिष्ठापकरोऽयम् ।  
श्रीभव नन्दरिक्ख नात्ती विहारे सुमनोहरे ॥ ८ ॥<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy, for 1920-21, Part I, paragraph 4 (a), page 8.

<sup>29</sup> From a communication received by Dr. A. Aiyappan, Superintendent, Madras Museum, from Mr. K. B. Karnath, Puttur, South Kanara, who has extracted it from the article on God Manjunath of Kadri by Mr. M. Govinda Pai, published in Samarpana. See also Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy, for 1920-21, Part I Paragraph 3 (c), page 8.



This means that the Alupa king mentioned above installed a figure of the deity Lokeshvara in the pleasant *vihara* (probably meaning a shrine here although it originally meant a monastery) at Kadri. Since Lokeshvara or Avalokitesvara is a Bodhisattva emanating from the Dhyani Buddha Amitabha, we have no other go but to look for a *dhyana* amongst the fourteen varieties of the Bodhisattva of this group,<sup>30</sup> which fits this figure as nearly as possible. It is therefore out of question to speak of this figure as Manjunatha or Manjughosha, etc., which are different forms of Manjusri, as has been attempted by the learned scholar Mr. M. Govinda Pai. Of the *dhyanas*, one that describes Halahala Lokeshvara seems to be applicable to this. It is as follows :

“ह्रीःकारवीजनिष्पन्नं हाहाहलं महाकृपम् ।  
त्रिनेत्रं त्रिमुल्लेखं जटामकुटं मण्डितम् ॥  
प्रयमास्यं स्मितं नीलं दक्षिणे वामं लोहितम् ॥  
शशाङ्कार्धचरं मूर्ध्नि कपालकृतशेखरम् ।  
जटान्तःस्थितं सम्यक् सर्वभरणभूषितम् ।  
सितारविन्दं निर्वासं धृतारसं सुन्दरम् ॥  
पद्भुजं श्वेतवक्त्रं च व्याघ्रचर्माम्बुप्रियम् ।  
वरदं दक्षिणे पादौ द्वितीये वासुमानिकाम् ॥  
चितीये ज्ञानचक्षुः वामे चापधरं तथा ।  
द्वितीये सितपद्मं च चितीये सनमेरु च ॥”

That is

“The worshipper should conceive himself as Halahala the great compassionate, originating from the sacred syllable ‘Hrih’, with three eyes, three faces and his matted hair rising upwards in the shape of a crown. The first (or the principal) face is white, the right blue and the left red. He bears on his head the crescent and the *kapala*. The Jina Amitabha is within his chignon and he is decked in all ornaments. He is resplendent like the white lotus and appears beautiful by the sentiment of passionate love he displays. He has six arms, a smiling face and is fond of garments of tiger-skin. He displays the Varada Mudra in the first right hand, the second has the rosary while the third flourishes the arrow. The first left hand carries the bow, the second the white lotus and the third touches the breast (of his Sakti) ”<sup>31</sup>.

From a comparison of the description with the figure in question, we know that the figure deviates only in regard to the hand poses. The crescent moon and *kapala* to be seen on the *jatamakuta* according to the *dhyana* are not seen in the picture and they may have been depicted in the figure. In other respects, it is obvious that it more or less satisfactorily answers the *dhyana*. In the absence of a more satisfactory identification we are

<sup>30</sup> B. Bhattacharyya, *ibid.*, page 33.

<sup>31</sup> B. Bhattacharyya, *ibid.*, page 41.





therefore tempted to identify this figure as Halahala Lokeshvara. The observations about this particular Lokeshvara made by Mr. Bhattacharyya in his very valuable book is worth reproducing here. He says :

“Three Sadhanas in the Sadhanamala are devoted to the worship of Halahala Lokeshvara. Images of this divinity are rarely to be met with in India. But in Nepal we have been able to find some, though they do not strictly follow the Sadhana. The distinguishing feature of Halahala is that he is generally accompanied by his Sakti or the female energy whom he carries on his lap. The Sadhanas all enjoin the presence of the Sakti, though at least two images, one in stone, another in bronze, have been discovered in Nepal, where the God has been represented alone. According to the Sadhanas, the God should be seated, but the two images above referred to represent him in a standing attitude.”<sup>42</sup>

The above quotation will suffice to show the rarity of representations of the deity as well as the variations occurring amongst them. This scholarly opinion is in support of the figure in question being a representation of Halahala and that too a very rare one probably the only one of its kind so far discovered in India.<sup>43</sup>

It is known that the later forms of Mahayanism in their rituals and practices were almost identical with Saivism and Saktism. Consequently as we have already said above, their pantheons too corresponded with those of the latter faiths. The correspondence of representations of several forms of Avalokitesvara with those of a variety of forms of Siva is especially noteworthy as is evidenced by the two bronze images of Avalokitesvaras examined above. It is quite interesting in this connection to note that the image of Halahala, with three eyes, matted hair, etc., may be the Buddhist counterpart of Sadasivamurti. The latter should have five faces; but in case it is installed in shrines with only three openings, it can be made with three faces, each one of them facing an opening. An example of this icon is the famous Sadasivamurti of Elephanta (which is, however, called even to this day wrongly as Triumurti). We have seen above that the Buddhist image in question is said, in its inscription, to have been installed in a *vikara*. We may not be far from truth if we say that this image was the *mula bera* (chief icon) of the shrine which had probably three openings, although the present temple does not show any indications to that effect.

Thus this icon is more or less similar in conception to Sadasiva. But there appears to be a combination of conceptions in this image. The lowest right hand in *varada* pose carrying something suggests at once its close affinity to the lower hand of the bronze image of

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>43</sup> In view of this identification of the figure, the one proposed by Mr. B. A. Salatore in his *History of Tuluva*, p. 383, and reproduced by the present writer in his article on *Some interesting Antiquities from Tuluva-Nad*, in *Transactions of the Archaeological Society of South India*, Vol. I (1955), pp. 54, has to be dropped.



Vishapaharana from Kilappudanur of the Madras Museum <sup>24</sup>. This image is said to be a very rare one where the conception of Siva holding the poison called *halahala* which was emitted by Vasuki the great serpent king, when he was used as the rope for the mountain during the churning of the milky ocean with it, is admirably executed. The correspondence between these two figures in this particular detail is so striking that the Kadri image may also be taken to represent the Buddhist counterpart of Vishapaharana. If this is possible then our identification of the figure as Halahala Lokesvara seems to be invented with a rare significance because the epithet *halahala*, the name of the poison, unmistakably proves the soundness of our hypothesis. Thus this image may be taken to represent the two conceptions of the Saivites in one, which is again another rare feature. At this juncture, it may be mentioned that, as we have supposed, the sculptors of the Chola country, who were, like their kings, ardent devotees of Siva, and who made these images, took the opportunity of making them for the Buddhists and used it effectively for the glorification of their god also, and achieved in the process, a unique result.

The abovementioned details of the three bronze figures of the Manjunatha temple at Kadri clearly show that the temple was once dedicated to the Buddha and the other deities of the Mahayanist pantheon, the versions of the *dhyana* or *sadhana* texts followed here being the product of a local school of the religion. We have emphasised above in more than one place, the importance of these figures not only for the history of the art of bronzes of South India but also for the political history of this country. It has been suggested above that these images are probably the works of the *sthapatis* of the country of the Cholas whose power extended all over South India during the 10th and 11th centuries A.D. This theory is supported by the facts, namely, that these images are of huge dimensions, 2', 3' and 4' high respectively, which is characteristic of bronze images produced in the Chola country; that these were apparently intended for taking out in procession on festival days which practice has been in vogue in the Tamil country from at least the Pallava period even in such Buddhist temples as those at Nagapattinam; and that the workmanship of these three is exactly akin to a number of bronzes of the Tamil country belonging to early Chola period. For example, the Buddha figure of this group though more powerful than the later-day Nagapattinam seated Buddha of the Madras Museum illustrated on Pl. I of *Nagapattinam and other Buddhist Bronzes in the Madras Museum*, is of the same character as the latter in conception and execution. The other two figures of Lokesvaras may be seen to compare favourably with the bronzes, illustrated in the Madras Museum Bulletin entitled *Catalogue of Hindu Metal Images* by Dr. F. H. Gravely and T. N. Ramachandran, of the Rama group (Pl. VII), of Kali (Pl. XIV, Fig. 1), of Natesa (Pl. XVII, Fig. 2), and of a number of others of the same type of workmanship not illustrated in the book, but kept in the reserve collection of the Madras Museum. Similarity in workmanship is easily observed

<sup>24</sup> F. H. Gravely and T. N. Ramachandran, *Catalogue of Hindu Metal Images in the Madras Museum*, pp. 108.



between these figures and the bronzes representing Gajantaka<sup>25</sup> from Valuvur, Tripurantaka<sup>26</sup> from the Brihadisvara temple at Tanjore and Kalyanasundara<sup>27</sup> from Tiruvorriyur. Not only the modelling of all these figures is of the same order but there is almost a complete agreement in the style of their decorative details. Particularly noteworthy are the floral designs and the *makara* heads, the *jalamakuta* and the *yajnopavita*, the ornaments and the garments. The most conspicuous decorative feature, which is of a clinching nature in so far as the determination of the place of origin of the *sthapati* is concerned, is the flower design occurring not only on the *mukutas* and ears but also in the lower garment of the two *Lokesvara* figures, which is a distinctive characteristic of early Chola sculpture both in stone and bronze as is seen prominently in the *Devi* figure of the Kalyanasundara group from Tiruvorriyur mentioned above.

It is necessary to state here that all the figures that have been cited above for purposes of comparison belong to about the 10th-11th century A.D. and hence the Kadri figures may have also to be taken as of the same period. In this instance, however, unlike in the case of the other figures compared, the question of dating is solved by the inscription engraved on the pedestal of Halahala *Lokesvara*. For the inscription says :

“ कळौ वषट्पञ्चमलिकान्ते चतुष्टये ।  
पुनरुद्गते चैवाष्टपञ्च समन्विते ॥ ७ ॥  
गतेषु नव मासेषु कन्यायां संस्थिते गुरौ ।  
पश्चिमेतं रोहिण्यां मृद्वर्ते शुभकक्षणे ” ॥ ८ ॥<sup>28</sup>

That is :

“ On the evening of that day in the tenth month (i.e.) Makara, in Kali 4668, which had Rohini as its star when Jupiter was in Kanya, etc.”<sup>29</sup> The Kali year gives 966 or 967 A.D. This was the period when the sculpture of South India reached the height of perfection, a phenomenon which never before or after occurred here. In view of the fact that only rarely bronzes and other sculptures of South India bear inscriptions on them and that images with precise dates of their installation, etc., recorded in the inscriptions on them are rarer still barring the singular exception of the Madras Museum Natesa from Belur illustrated on Pl. XVI, Fig. 2, of the *Madras Museum Bulletin* on Hindu Metal Images referred to above, this image of Halahala is, in this respect also, a unique specimen and it may therefore be taken as the basis for identifying works in the same style.

<sup>25</sup> C. Sivaramamurti, *Geographical and Chronological Factors in Indian Iconography in Ancient India*, No. 6 (1950), Pl. XXVIII-D.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, Pl. XXVIII-B.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, Pl. XXI-B. See also the bronzes of this type illustrated in the books, *The Art of Indian Asia* by H. Zimmer, *Art of India and Pakistan* by L. Ashton and others and *South Indian Bronzes* by O. C. Ganguli.

<sup>28</sup> From the communication from Mr. K. S. Karanth to Dr. A. Aiyappa, referred to above, and B.A. Selators, *History of Pulasa*, p. 95.

<sup>29</sup> *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, *ibid.*



It will now be clear how important are these figures for the history of Mahayana Buddhism in the Tulu country. The existence of these magnificent bronzes affords a positive proof for the existence of a prosperous Buddhist Community here which had probably had some connection with the equally or more prosperous Buddhist Community of Nagapattinam on the East Coast. The latter community probably contributed much to the former not only by way of experienced sculptors who were responsible for making the images, but also by way of renowned teachers of Buddhism. It must, however, be mentioned that we have not yet come across, in this region, the name of either a sculptor or a Buddhist teacher of old from the Tamil country. It is to be noted that, while at Nagapattinam and in several other places in the Tamil country, there are evidences showing the continuance of Buddhism for a long time, there is little or no evidence, other than these images, met with in the Tulu country to prove the continuance of the religion here after about 1000 A.D. Nevertheless, we may be justified in presuming that the religion might have continued for at least another hundred or two hundred years, although the exact date when it disappeared from here is not known. It is also not known when the temple where these images were originally installed, probably as the chief icons, but where they are now found in a subordinate place, was converted into a temple of Siva called Manjunatha <sup>33a</sup>.

It must be noted here, before proceeding further, that while there are no signs of a halo for the Nagapattinam Buddha described above or for the Kadri Buddha, there is provision made for a *prabhavali* to go behind the image of Lokanatha as well as for the image of Halahala though it is missing now in both. In the latter image, however, there is an ornate oval *prabhavali* behind the central figure and a less ornately worked halo-like oval *prabha* behind the heads of the attendant figures. This detail becomes, as will be seen below, more and more conventionalised as time passed on.

*Later Buddhist Images from Tamil Nad.*—*Seated Buddha* (Fig. 18) from Tyaganur, Attur taluk, Salem district. This is now in a modern temple. There is another image, in the same place in a field, which will be dealt with below. This figure is of the completely developed form of the Buddha except for the flame on the head. It is not known why it has been left uncarved as a lump. Since it is buried it is not possible to make out whether its *padmasana* is intact or broken away. It does not seem to have been provided with a halo. Apparently the figure is powerfully rendered; the modelling is rather plump and the execution bold and vigorous. Instead of the supreme tenderness of facial expression expected of such representations, it is here of the self-confident type similar to the late Buddha from Amaravati mentioned above. That the sculptor who did this was of no mean order is obviously seen from the unwavering and confident manner in which he has chiselled out the nearly square face, the prominent nose, the full lips, the strong and broad

<sup>33a</sup>. This view is author's own and is based on the nature of the images and their importance recorded in the ancient inscription incised on one of them.

shoulders, and the highly proportionate limbs and torso, which are the usual marks of a perfect specimen of sculpture of early Chola type. All these characteristics make this figure a magnificent specimen of sculpture. It may belong to about end of the 10th century A.D.

*Seated Buddha* (Fig. 19) from Madagaram, Tanjore district. It is now in the Tanjore Art Gallery. The figure is seated on a beautiful *padmasana*. The details are all worked very clearly, the curls of hair, the *urna*, the *civara* and the ends of the lower garments on the legs all being pronounced. In this figure too the *ushnisha* on the head is unworked, and the reason for it is not known. This figure too does not appear to have had any halo behind its head. The depression and the *trivali* on the neck are clearly seen. Coming from the heart of the Chola country, it has the characteristic square face which is indicative of the fact that the figure is clearly of the Chola type of figures dateable to about 1000 A.D. Unlike the above figure, the expression on the face of this figure is not one of contemplation but of sublime bliss, and it is suggestive of grace rather than of power. The beauty of this figure is unfortunately marred by the ugly additions of the halo, throne and a frilled cloth in front, all in cement, made to the figure by the misplaced enthusiasm of the organisers of the Tanjore Art Gallery.

*Seated Buddha* \* near the Police Station at (Siva) Kanchipuram (Fig. 20) may be said to belong to a slightly later period, i.e., to about the first half of the 11th century A.D. Here all the details of a seated Buddha are present of which the *padmasana* is noteworthy. An interesting thing about this figure is that its face is of the Javanese type rather than of the indigenous Chola type. Here the *civaras* are distinctly seen. The *ushnisha* is not yet a fully developed flame.

*Seated Buddha* (Fig. 21) from Tiruvatti, South Arcot district, may be said to belong to the middle of the 11th century A.D. or to a slightly later period. Its hands and nose are broken and the pedestal missing. Here also the features are prominent. Especially noteworthy are the curls of hair and the *civaras*. The modelling is powerful and the expression is indicative of sublime tranquility. The *ushnisha* is worked like a flame which is closely attached to the curls of hair and has not yet been shown as having a prominent pedestal for it as is seen in the figures to be described below.

*Buddha* (Fig. 22) from Tyaganur, Attur taluk, Salem district. It is also in the seated posture and may be said to be of the same type and age as of the figure described above, except for this difference that here the expression is suggestive of joy born out of love and compassion.

\* Dr. C. Minakshi, *Kanchi—An Introduction to its Architecture*. Published by the Information and Broadcasting Department of India (February 1954), figure on top of pp. 37.





*Standing Buddha* (Fig. 23) from Tiruvalanjuli, Tanjore district, may be said to belong to the same period as the above figures. The prominent but delicately carved features, the exceedingly proportionate modelling and the tastefully worked drapery make this figure as one of the masterpieces of sculpture belonging to the end of the early Chola period. A noteworthy detail of this figure is its *urna*, which is shown not as the usual prominent circular dot on the forehead but simply outlined as an inverted question mark in the fashion of a number of bronze images from Nagapattinam<sup>41</sup>. Moreover, it is a rare specimen from the Tamil country, because though beautiful standing Buddha images in bronze are fairly common, standing Buddhas in stone have not been met with except this. Almost all the other stone figures of the Buddha are in the seated posture as is evident from the several figures examined above and below. Besides its rarity, it has another noteworthy feature also. That is, unlike the many Buddha images noticed till now, the drapery of this figure covers its entire body and the ends of its have been executed with beautiful frilling, like that of a number of standing bronze Buddha images from Nagapattinam. This frilling, the *urna* and other details show the close correspondence between a metal image and a stone figure of the same period and locality. It also does not have a halo. In general, the features of the figure go to show that the *sthapati* who produced this was still imbued with the artistic traditions of earlier periods.

*Seated Buddha* (Fig. 24) from Elaiyur, Tanjore district. It is seated on *padmasana*. The *urna* is prominent and the *ushnisha* has assumed the shape of a flame. The *trivali* on the neck is prominent. The face is somewhat elongated and its features suggest that the style of the figure is influenced by foreign art traditions. This is also seen from the peculiar modelling of the torso and especially of the shoulders. This figure also does not seem to have had any halo behind its head. Absence of the halo may sometimes indicate an early date, because most of the earlier figures do not have it and almost all the later figures have it. But the style in which this figure is executed, is of the late 11th century A.D. and in spite of its somewhat defective proportions, it is powerfully rendered.

*Buddha* (Fig. 25) from Jayankondacholapuram<sup>42</sup>, Tiruchirappalli district, may be dated to about the beginning of the late Chola period from a variety of developed details observed in it. As usual, the figure is seated in the *dhyana* posture on a beautiful *padmasana*. The other iconographical details such as the curls of hair, the flame over it, and the *civaras* are prominent. The face is square in form and its features are pronounced. The modelling of the figure is exquisite. That the person represented is endowed with great spiritual potentialities is known from the subtle smiling expression and the powerful and broad

<sup>41</sup> T. N. Ramachandran, *ibid.*, pp. 46 Pl. No. XXX, 10.

<sup>42</sup> This has been noticed in the following—*Annual Report of Archaeology, Southern Circle, for 1891*, pp. 33; *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy for 1891*, para. 4; *Trichinopoly Gazetteer*, Vol. I, pp. 349; Sewall, *List of Antiquarian Remains in the Madras Presidency*, Vol. I, p. 265.



shoulders. The most interesting feature of this figure is the halo behind its head. It is oval in shape and simple in workmanship unlike the halos of the figures to be described below. Along the margin of the halo are carved three-pronged flames. Surmounting the halo is carved in high relief a beautiful little umbrella a characteristic of Sakyaśimha Buddha, which suggests his royal status. This is done in the manner of the umbrellas occurring in some of the seals of the copper-plate grants of the time of Rajendra Chola I. Hence this figure may with some reason be assigned to about the later half of the 11th century A.D. This is also supported by the excellent modelling of the figure which is akin to that of the sculptures belonging to the temples at Tanjore and Gangaikondacholapuram. Furthermore, the umbrella is set against the background of a circular slab on which is carved, in a beautiful manner, the branches of the Bodhi tree, which is rarely represented in stone sculptures of the Buddha. Another interesting thing about this figure is the *trivali* and the depression shown on the neck.

Above all this figure is noteworthy for the name by which it is called locally even to this day. It is called Paluppar (பலுப்பர்) and is now found erected on a platform on the bund of the local tank called Paluppurani, which has got its name most probably after the figure. The word Paluppar in Tamil means one who is ripe. The term as applied to this figure is most appropriate because it is an exact equivalent of the Samyak Sambuddha who was the most ripened amongst the wise. It will be of interest to compare, in this connection the various Tamil terms referring to the Buddha which occur not only in the inscriptions but also in literary works belonging to different periods of South Indian history.

*Seated Buddha* (Fig. 26) from Nagapattinam. Of the numerous late Buddhist bronzes discovered at Nagapattinam, the seated Buddha illustrated on pl. I of the *Madras Museum Bulletin* on these images is particularly noteworthy. Mr. T. N. Ramachandran gives a detailed description<sup>42a</sup> of the figure which, though long, is reproduced, here in full, in view of the light it throws on the various interesting parts of this image.

"No. 37. (Pl. I). *Height with pedestal and prabha* 73 cm.; *without pedestal* 29.8 cm. From Nanayakkara street, Nagapattinam, 1934. Hands in *dhyana*, the right palm which is uppermost bearing the following mark (Pl. XXIX, 2). Seated on an elegant triangular *padmasana* mounted on a rectangular *bhadrāsana*, the latter provided with holes, one at either end, and corresponding rings on its inside to hold the shaft spikes of a *prabha*. The *prabha* is in three parts, a lower part, a middle one and an upper one. The lower part which is designed as the background of a *simhasana* is a broad and curvilinear plate with foliage designs at the ends flanked by rearing *Sardulas* or *Yalis* (Dravidian) and with a horizontal projection in the centre intended to serve as a cushion for the body of the Buddha to lean against. There are foliage designs present on the cushion and also one at either end.

<sup>42a</sup>, *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.



The middle part is a circular aureole (*bhamandala*) which was secured to the lower one by means of an iron shaft (now rusty and broken) fixed to its back and going into two sockets present in the lower one. The aureole goes behind the Buddha's head and bears a circular course of 35 flames over a similar course or band of foliage. The shaft that supported the aureole also supported the third and upper part which is now loose owing to the shaft having rusted away. The third part is a purely decorative plate, circular for the most part but tapering at the top. It consists of three creeper courses in the midst of heavy foliage and flowers such as lotuses, lilies, etc. At its bottom a spread umbrella is attached, which goes right over the head of the Buddha. Robe of the Buddha as in fig. 31 but the folded edge is so wide both in front and back that there is clearly the suggestion that the latter is a different cloth corresponding to the *uttariya*. *Urna* mark is pl. XXX, 10. Ear lobes are bored and are proportionate to the face. Nose pleasant with nostrils also indicated and lips quite real. Hair in seven rows of curls surmounted by flame-like *ushnisha*. The anatomy of the whole figure is smooth suggestive of flesh, hands, legs, nose and fingers being done to perfection.

"Type South India, comparable with Late Cola bronzes. Similar to Buddha No. 10."

"To the lower part of the *prabha* are attached the figures of Nagarajas, one at either end. They stand on either side of the Buddha and function as the *cari*-bearers of the Buddha holding a fly-whisk in the hand that is farther away from the Buddha and holding the hand that is nearer the Buddha in what is called the *vismaya-hasta* or pose of praise or wonder. Evidently they are recounting the praises of the Buddha with feelings of wonder and devotion. Five serpent hoods placed over their heads indicate their Naga-nature while their personal attire and ornaments such as *karanda-makuta* on head, *patra-kundalas* in the ears, necklaces, waist-girdle, wristlets, armlets, rings and belt and drawers and three stranded *yajnopavita* indicate their regal if not their divine status. Their symmetrical poise by the side of the erect Buddha, with their bodies inclined towards and their legs away from the Buddha, their anatomical features, and the absence of any marks on their foreheads and palms all resemble so closely features present in some of the Andhra sculptures of the Buddha such as those from Amaravati, Goli, and Nagarjunakonda that one cannot resist concluding that the Nagarajas in this were perhaps influenced by the Andhra ones. The Buddha's life is so full of associations with the denizens of the Naga world that the early Buddhist sculptors derived from the Nagas a convenient decorative motif with which they decorated their sculptures especially when they portrayed scenes from the Buddha's life or from his past births called the *Jatakas*. The resemblance of these Nagarajas with the Andhra ones coupled with the determination of the Buddha type as indigenous go to prove that the whole composition is typically South Indian (Late Cola)."



From the above description, the importance of this figure is easily understood. Though no precise dating is suggested by Mr. T. N. Ramachandran, his assigning it to the late Chola period may be taken advantage of and a date at the commencement of the period, i.e., about the end of the 11th century A.D., suggested for the figure. This is supported by its artistic embellishments which are characteristic of images of this period. Some of the features met with in this figure may be easily traced in the stone sculptures that have gone into the decorative scheme of the big temples at Tanjore and Gangaikondacholapuram.

Besides this seated Buddha, a number of small standing Buddha figures from Nagapattinam may also be assigned to the same period. A particular feature met with in most of these images is the special manner in which their drapery is done. It is made to cover the entire body of the figure and its ends are shown in a frilled form, a pattern which is suggestive of artistic influences from North India particularly of Nalanda and Kurkihar.

*Maitreya Bodhisattva* (Fig. 27), from Nagapattinam. Before examining the other figures we should make mention of the Bodhisattva Maitreya of exquisite workmanship belonging to later Chola period illustrated on Plate VII, Fig. 1 of the *Madras Museum Bulletin* mentioned above. Its description as given in the book (p. \*) is as follows :—

"No. 46. (pl. VI, fig. 1). Height with pedestal 75 cm., without pedestal 62.5 cm. Nanayakkara Street, Nagapattinam, 1934.—Maitreya Standing in *tribhanga* on a circular *padmasana* having 4 holes for securing the image to a base while carrying it in procession. The holes and the relatively big size of the image prove that the image was one of the *utrasava-vigrahas*. Four arms; upper right with rosary, upper left with a flower stalk from which spring 12 flowers and 2 buds (are they *nagapushpas*?) lower right *varada*, lower left *kataka*, the latter two with the following palm marks (p. XXX, 88). Richly decorated. Hair arranged flame-like resembling a *jalamakuta* with design of stupa in front; *makara-kundalas* in the ears, necklaces four stranded *jajnopavita*, waist—girdle, loin-cloth with *simhamukha*, armlets, wristlets, rings, *padasaras* and *sirascakra*. Comparable with Chola type; hence indigenous. The presence of a stupa on the *makuta* points to the identity of the image as that of Maitreya."

Such exquisite specimens as above were produced even during so late a period as the 12th century A.D. It is well known that from the next century or so onwards all arts and crafts have begun gradually to decline in India.

*Seated Buddha* (Fig. 28) from Arikamedu (Kakayan Tope), south of Pondicherry. This is seated in the usual *dhyana* posture. It has the other usual features such as the three garments, the *urna*, the curls of hair and the *ushnisha*. There is the *trivali* on the neck. The expression on the face is peaceful, in spite of the mutilation of the nose, etc. The halo





shown behind the head with its *makara*-headed lower ends touching the shoulders is more developed than that of the figure from Jayankondacholapuram. This feature combined with the modelling of the torso which tends to be angular, though the earlier tradition of rounding off of the joints still lingers on to some extent, is highly suggestive of a date a little later than that of the figure described just above.

*Seated Buddha*<sup>43</sup>, height about 3 feet 9 inches. It is found in the Karukkilamarndamman temple at Kanchipuram (Fig. 29) and shows further development in its iconographic details. Here the Buddha is in the *bhūṣpārśva mudra*. The features of the face and head, though pronounced, are in the classical style. The face here is of the Chola type. The noteworthy feature of this figure is the halo behind its head. It is beautifully worked with tassels inside and flame on the outside margin and with *makara* heads at both the lower ends which are shown touching the shoulders. The general treatment of the figure is evidently of a very high order and its date may therefore be about the beginning of the 12th century.

*Buddha* (Fig. 30) from Manambady, Tanjore district, may be examined next. The figure is seated on a high *bhadrāsana* which has seven mouldings. The *padmasana* which should be found in such figures is conspicuous by its absence, the reason for this being not known. The halo behind the head is more developed than in the previous figures. Although the modelling is not perfect, the facial features are rendered clearly, but the expression does not satisfy completely the prescribed norm. Yet it is a good example of late Chola sculpture of the 12th century A.D.

*Seated Buddha* (Fig. 31) from Karadikkuppam, north of Pondicherry. The figure is seated on *padmasana* in the *dhyāna* pose as the previous figure. The other features are present as usual. The *uśnīṣa* has assumed the shape of a five-tongued flame with a border at its base. The *prabhā* behind the head is also more developed than that of the other figure from Pondicherry. Above all that this figure is later than the other figure from Pondicherry is known from the peculiar semi-circular depression carved around the neck and by the greater angularity of the joints observed here. It is dated to about the early 12th century.

*Seated Buddha* (Fig. 32) from Kuvam may be said to come next. It is also a finely executed specimen noted for its rugged strength and vigour. The distinctive characteristic of this figure is its *prabhavali* which is supported on pilasters which are taller here than in the Kanchipuram figure to be noticed below. Another noteworthy detail is the halo of the pointed arch type, which is seen encompassing only the head.

<sup>43</sup> T. A. Gopinatha Rao, *Buddha Vestiges in Kanchipuram*, in *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. 44, Fig. 5.



*Buddha*, <sup>44</sup>height 2½ feet, from Karur five miles to the west of Ponparri, Arantangi taluk, Tanjore district, is a small but beautiful figure seated in the usual *dhyana* posture. It has around it, the *prabha* on pillars which is of the type of the *prabha* met with in the Kuvam Buddha mentioned above. The other features of it are unmistakably in the late Chola style. It must be noted here that the village of Karur, as given above, is very near Ponparri, the birth-place of the famous Buddhimitra, the renowned author of the *Vira-soligam*, which is a treatise on Tamil grammar. He lived in the 11th century A.D. and is said to have written this work during the rule of the Chola King Virarajendra. The existence of this image in a nearby village, the reported existence of images of this kind in several other villages in the neighbourhood, and the late Chola style of this image, all go to show that Buddhism was undoubtedly in a flourishing condition in this area during the Chola time, which furnishes an additional evidence in support of the theory that Buddhimitra hailed from Ponparri. It may be mentioned here in passing about the existence in the big village of Avadaiyarkovil, about seven miles to the north of Karur, of a Siva temple, famed in the story of the Saiva saint Manikkavachakar, which is noted for its beautiful gopura and pillared mandapa <sup>45</sup> dating from about the late Chola times which shows unmistakably that this area, during this period, was bustling with brisk artistic activity to which is due images of the kind of the Buddha under reference.

*Buddha*, <sup>46</sup>height 2 feet 6 inches, from Karukkilamarnda amman temple, Kanchipuram (Fig. 33) may be said to belong to a slightly subsequent period. The features are all pronounced, although the expression in the face and the general style of the figure go to show that it is still in the classical tradition. The most conspicuous of the features which suggests the late dating of the figure is the *prabhavali* behind its head. It is now supported on pilasters carved on either side of the figure, quite unlike the *prabhas* of the figures noticed above. It has already been said that the development of this design as well as the other features, is decisive in dating because sometimes late images without the *prabha* may preserve

<sup>44</sup> This was found by me in the tank belonging to the Saiva and Kali temples at the village where I had been in June 1953 for worshipping at these temples. It was used by the devotees of these deities for washing their clothes on. In fact I myself used it so before I suspected it to be a sculpture in high relief and found it to be one, to my great joy, on turning it upside down. Immediately, with the aid of the priest of the temple by name Suppayya Pujari, who is of the Potters class called the Velars, I removed the sculpture to the bund of the tank. When I left the place I told the Pujari that the image might be taken away from there to the Madras Museum sometime after my return to Madras not only because there the image would be preserved well and displayed for the benefit of the people but also because I thought that the image being a representation of the Buddha, would not be liked by the devotees of the Hindu deities mentioned above, to be kept there. Subsequently when I visited the place again in March 1956, to examine the image if it could be removed now to the Madras Museum in order to display it as a significant exhibit, at the time of the Buddha Jayanti Exhibition held in the Museum between 27th May and 18th August 1956, the Pujari told me that there arose a big dispute over the image between two rival groups of people of the locality, the more powerful group which emerged successful desiring that the image should be retained in the precincts of the temple mentioned above and worship offered to it also as for the images of other Hindu deities. This was rather startling to hear and I was disappointed much because my desire was not fulfilled. My disappointment was more when I was told that it would be futile to try to convince the people concerned for the giving away of the figure to the Museum as they would not budge at all.

<sup>45</sup> A. K. Coomaraswamy, *ibid.*, p. 123, Fig. 239.

<sup>46</sup> T. A. Gopinatha Rao, *ibid.*, Fig. 4.



elements of earlier workmanship and thus cause some difficulty in dating. But when the *prabha* is present, the dating may be done with much less difficulty. The other two figures illustrated by Mr. T. A. G. Rao in his above mentioned article as Fig. 2 (headless) and Fig. 3 (Fig. 34 here) may also be said to belong to the same age as that of this figure, i.e., the 13th century or a little later.

*Seated Buddha* (Fig. 35) from Manikandi, Ramanathapuram district. It probably belongs to the 13th century A.D. when once more the kings of the Pandyan dynasty were powerful almost all over the Tamil country. Here the *padmasana*, the *prabha*, the *ushnisha* and other features are all fully developed. In spite of the fact that its face is worn out, enough of its features remain indicating the sublime peace. There is an inscription on the upper rim of the pedestal in the Grantha script which is too weathered to be read. It is the only inscribed stone Buddha.

The *Buddha*<sup>41</sup> in reclining posture on the outer wall of the Ekamresvara temple at Kanchipuram (Fig. 36) may be assigned to about the late Chola period. Evidently it is a representation of the Buddha's death. As no other image of the Buddha in the *parinirvana* attitude has, so far, been known from South India, this figure may be said to be a unique specimen of its kind. Its face is badly damaged but the *ushnisha* suggest the late date for it. Here the Buddha lies on his right side having placed his head and legs on cushioned pillows. Behind the head is the *prabha* which, though not extending down to the legs, is ornately worked which is another late feature. Moreover, that by the time this image was made the iconography of the Buddha images has become settled and conventionalised is easily seen by the double-lotus pedestal which is made to cling on to the feet even when the Buddha is reclining! The figure has an oblong *bhadra pitha*. On the right end of this *pitha* and below the double-lotus design is a miniature figure with hands in *anjali* pose held above the head and the face indicating extreme remorse. This figure may stand for Ananda, the close companion of the Buddha. The small size of this figure compared to the big Buddha is also done according to the requirements of the later-day iconographic texts namely that the attendant figures have to be done in *catustala* or *tritula* measure while the main figure should be done either in the *dasatala* or *navatala* measure. Though this figure is a rare specimen from the Tamil country, it is a very poor one when compared with the magnificent representations of the subject occurring at Ajanta and Anuradhapura.

*Other Buddha images.*—On the walls of Ekamresvara temple, Kanchipuram, are illustrated in Figs. 37 and 38. Here are found two sets of figures. The figures of one set are carved in high relief in the *dhyana* pose on *padmasana* within an elaborately worked *prabha*-on-pillar motif. A close view of one of the figures of this set is shown in Fig. 39. It shows a separate *prabha* behind the head of the figure, within the one which encloses the

<sup>41</sup> Dr. C. Minakshi, *ibid.*, bottom figure on p. 27.



entire figure. This second *prabha* is now not shown as touching the shoulders of the figure as was the case in some of the earlier images described above, but is shown as if hanging in the air. The *ushnisha* is shown as an elongated cone which adheres only slightly to the top of the head. Further the modelling of the figure is obviously of a very inferior order, much more degenerate than that of the Manikandi figure. This fact undoubtedly proves the gradual decay of traditions of art which was brought about probably by the political troubles of the period to which these images belong. It is well known that South India was shaken for a while by the Muhammadan invasion about the beginning of the 14th century A.D. and that it took some decades or centuries for the country to recover from this shock. As a result of the Muhammadan invasion a few elements of the art traditions that were in vogue amongst the Muslims began to influence the architects and sculptors of South India. Typical Indo-Islamic art motifs such as the arches of various shapes became fashionable with South Indian artists. Hence the presence of this element of art in a variety of works of art produced since the 14th century A.D.

This new development is borne out significantly by the figures belonging to the second set. They are also carved in high relief in the *dhyana* posture; but the niches in which they are carved into has arched top of a very simple type. The simplicity of the arch, may perhaps be taken as evidence to show that these images were made at a time when the influences of the Indo-Islamic art traditions had only just begun to be fashionable in South India, which may have happened in the 14th-15th century A.D.

Thus the existence of Buddhist images dating from before 7th century A.D. to about the 15th century A.D. at Kanchipuram, clearly shows that there continued to exist here a Buddhist settlement the members of which were probably in a flourishing condition so as to be able to have their own temples which contained such important and large images as described above.

To the last phase of the history of Buddhism in the Tamil country belong a few large images also from Nagapattinam and from a few other places in the Tanjore district. Of these very late figures mention must be made of the standing bronze Buddha figure enclosed within an elaborately worked *prabhavali* dated to about the <sup>41</sup> 16th century A.D. and the Avalokitesvara image standing within a *prabhavali* dating from after 1600 A.D. <sup>42</sup>. The existence of such large figures as these dating from so late a period as the 17th century A.D. is proof positive that there were Buddhists in the Tamil country especially in the district of Tanjore till then, although it is a mystery as to what happened to those Buddhists and Buddhism after that date.

<sup>41</sup> T. N. Ramachandran, *Nagapattinam and other Buddhist Bronzes in the Madras Museum*, p. 37, No. 12.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50, No. 47, Pl. XVII Fig. 1





## BUDDHISM : ITS HISTORY AND SECTS IN INDIA.

By P. R. Srinivasan

### Introduction.

Over a third of the world's population follow Buddhism. A great majority of them are Asians. The great religion as it is practised to-day in the various countries show features which are quite new, some probably unknown to its original pattern. When it spread to various countries and began to take root there, it had to absorb many an element of the local cults and philosophies. During the long periods of its existence and growth, there had been a re-orientation of the beliefs and practices of the religion which make it now almost unrecognisable. Even in the early stages of its development, it was split up into two schools called the Theravada and the Mahayana. These were further divided into several sects as time went on. The Theravada spread to countries like Ceylon, Burma and Siam where it still continues retaining many of its old features. Since this school went southward in India, it came to be called as the Southern school. Mahayana, on the other hand spread to China, Korea, Japan, Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim. There it had a difficult task to perform before it got firmly established, acquiring almost a new garb and even a modified substance. As these countries are to the north of India, this school was called the Northern. Though these two schools are said to be based on the two ancient schools, some features of one of them may be found in vogue among the followers of the other and *vice versa*. Brief notices about the Buddhists in the various countries are to be found in another chapter. Here the story of the religion as it grew and developed in India proper will be briefly dealt with.

### Reasons for the growth of various schools.

It is well known that no records relating to the actual beginnings of the religion have come down to us. Hence its development has to be studied only from the records and writings of the subsequent periods. There are two types of records; one consisting of the scriptures and other works in Pali, sacred to the followers of the Theravada school, and the other consisting of the scriptures and other works, originally written in Sanskrit, a great majority of which have come down only in Tibetan and Chinese translations, and in vogue amongst the northern Buddhists. A comparative study of these texts reveals a great measure of unanimity as regards the inception of the religion as well as the vicissitudes it had undergone during the course of time. The fundamental doctrines of the religion remain the same in all the schools in the different countries. But as regards the practices and beliefs there has been ever since the time of the Buddha, differences of opinion which have contributed to the growth of the different schools.



It is well known that the various schools had for their basis the two most important principles that the Buddha propounded in his first sermon at the Deer-Park. They are that (1) everything is changing every moment or in other words things are impermanent (*anicca*), including the self (*anatta*), and that (2) the sufferings are universal which result out of bad craving of desires, and can be overcome only by following the eight-fold path chalked out by him. He said that salvation can be attained by this means. He did not answer straightaway any questions bearing on matters irrelevant to salvation.

In the course of time, due to experience and learning the disciples of the Buddha began to analyse his sayings and interpret them in various ways moral, philosophical and mystical which resulted in the coming into being of several schools.

Before examining the various well-built, finely gilded and beautifully decorated superstructures of the later schools raised over the simple but everlasting foundations of the Buddha's doctrine, a brief outline of the great man's life may not be out of place here.

#### **Siddhartha as a Seeker of Truth.**

As the story goes, on leaving his country Siddhartha became an ascetic and was for a time in the hermitage of sage Arala Kalama in the suburb of Vaisali. During his short stay there the Prince could attain the seventh stage of the eight stages leading to Nirvana. This he could do by the application of his rare qualities namely strong will, energy, self-recollection, meditation and intellection. Then he went to Rajagriha where he rejected the offer of half the kingdom by king Bimbisara but sought the help of sage Rudraka Ramaputta to reach higher stages in the path to Nirvana. In a short while ascetic Siddhartha reached the eighth stage also but it did not lead to that transcendental state which was beyond all these stages. Followed by five of his co-students who were impressed by his extraordinary ability he then proceeded to Uruvela. On the way he stopped for a while at Gaya where he realised that so long as one was possessed of desires it was impossible for him to realise the highest truth. In spite of this, he performed the severest of ascetic practices for six years, along with his five companions. Finding these methods of no avail, he decided to take food and with a strong body, wanted to realise the truth by means of *dhyanas*. At this time he was deserted by his five followers who went away to the Deer-Park near Banaras to continue their ascetic life.

#### **Siddhartha Becomes the Sambuddha.**

Ascetic Siddhartha then took food offered by Sujata, the daughter of the chief of Uruvela. After this he seated himself on a seat of grass under the Bodhi tree with a firm resolve to realise the truth. "It was the night of the full moon of May, and he was thirty-five". Then he began to meditate. According to the stories, it was now that he was



attacked by Mara and his hosts who were ultimately overcome by the unflinching attitude of Siddhartha. Then he passed into deep meditation and rose in consciousness through the planes and sub-planes of material existence. When he reached the fourth *dhyana* he got the six supernatural powers and other *siddhis*. The culmination of all his efforts was reached now and by a rare intuition he realised the highest truth, *Bodhi*. He became, thus the Sambuddha, or Wisdom Incarnate. This enlightenment made him free from all that was wrong and evil and showed him the sameness of all things. The truth realised came to be known as the *Dharma*.

For seven weeks afterwards the Buddha was in seven kinds of trances. In the seventh week when he was under the Tairayana tree he came across the two traders from Gandhara, namely Tapussa and Ballika. They, attracted by the shining sage, became his first *upasakas* (lay-disciples). As there were then only two principles, namely Buddha and Dharma of the three jewels of Buddhism including Sangha which was yet to come into being, these two lay-devotees of the Buddha uttered only the two salutations, namely "salutation to the Buddha"; and "salutation to the Dharma" at the time of becoming disciples, earning thereby the name of *dveracika*.

The truth that the Buddha realised was so deep and subtle, and realisable only by the wisest, made him pause and think if it could be imparted to ordinary people. But the noble Buddha who cast away all for realising that with which he wanted to remove the suffering of all other beings left off his hesitation, and decided to preach the new doctrine for the benefit of humanity. According to the texts he did this at the imploration of God Brahma himself who pleaded on behalf of those few beings who were then fit to benefit by the doctrine. When the decision was taken the Buddha determined that he would only speak about the way to the truth and not about the truth itself.

#### The Buddha's First Sermon at Sarnath.

As his doctrine would be beneficial only to those who possessed high spiritual merits, the Buddha thought of imparting it to his five erstwhile companions who were doing penance in the Isipatana near Banaras. Accordingly he went there. Though the five ascetics did not at first want to honour the Buddha, they were compelled by his spiritual splendour to pay homage to him and to listen to his discourses. The First Sermon he delivered was the famous *Dharmacakrapravartana* Sermon. By this he is said to have set in motion the "Wheel of Law of Good men" for the first time. The second sermon he delivered was on the impermanence of all things (*anicca*). These two principles which the Buddha made public for the first time were the most important ones of the new path which he realised under the Bodhi tree. When the five ascetics realised the superiority of the Buddha's teachings they immediately became his disciples. Now the Sangha was



born, completing the noble Buddhist Trinity called the *Triratna* consisting of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Of the five disciples, Kaundanya got enlightenment immediately after hearing the sublime discourses.

Then the Buddha visited Banaras where he met a youth called Yasa who also became a monk. There was no ceremony accompanying the ordination of these monks and the Buddha admitted new entrants to his order by merely saying "*ehi Bhikkhu*." At his instance Yasa's father now saluted all the three members of the Buddhist Trinity. Since Yasa's father was amongst a few who became lay-disciples by uttering the *trisarana* he was called a *tevassika*.

Then the Buddha commenced his life-long peregrinations in the course of which he acquired many notable persons of his time as his followers or disciples and could not only establish his new religion in the country of its origin but also spread it far and wide in North India through his disciples devoted to the Buddhist Trinity.

During the period when the Buddha was preaching his doctrine he is said to have emphasised only the two fundamental principles mentioned above to the people at large. But it is also said that he revealed the subtle meanings and import of the Dharma to a select group of his disciples who were fit to understand them. As the members of the Sangha increased there came into existence rules for admission of monks into it as well as rules to be followed by them as a routine after becoming a member of the Sangha. Then there also came into being rules relating to the administration of the Sangha when it began to spread all over the country. In course of time a Canon was also adopted incorporating the principles of the religion and the rules relating to the Sangha. This Canon is called *Tipitaka* on account of the fact that it consists of three different collections of texts, each collection being called a *pitaka* (basket). It is said that these texts were in Pali originally. The Pali Canon as it is now used by the Southern Buddhists was committed to writing only about the 1st century B.C. in Ceylon. But it is known from the Tibetan and Chinese translations that there existed a Canon in Sanskrit also, even before 1st century B.C., which was in vogue amongst the Buddhists of the Northern school. The Pali and the Sanskrit Canons have several points of agreement amongst them. There are also sharp differences of views between them on certain matters. These sacred texts of the Buddhists appear to have been commented upon by erudite Buddhist monks belonging to different periods and countries. From the canonical texts it is possible to get a fairly clear picture about the Buddha, his Dharma and his Order. The later commentaries are helpful in clarifying knotty points. Details relating to the Dharma, not in its original form as propounded by the Buddha but in a more developed form may be noticed briefly.





According to the scholars of Buddhism who have had a tendency to squeeze out from one kind of fruit the juice of a different kind of fruit the Buddha had had to overcome leaders of various other religions and cults of his time who were said to be immersed deeply in superstition and wrong doings. They may be classified broadly into two extreme groups—one indulging in luxury and the other mortifying the physique. The enlightenment of the Buddha is said to have revealed to him a middle path which by its careful avoidance of both the extremes, was the only path that could lead to salvation. This middle path (*majjhima patipada*) as contradistinguished from the former (*agolha patipada*) and the latter (*nijjhama patipada*) consisted of the eight-fold path and the four noble truths already mentioned. This path is also said not to indulge in vain speculations about *asti* and *nasti* *sasvata* and *asasvata*, *anta* and *ananta*.

As regards the eight-fold path it consists of the following: Right understanding, Right mindedness, Right speech, Right action, Right occupation, Right recollections, Right resolutions, and Right meditation. These are grouped into three different sections, viz., physical (*sila*), mental (*citta*) and intellectual (*panna*). That is, as in the case of all other religions, in Buddhism also a seeker after truth has not only to observe certain moral precepts but also to engage himself in deep mental and intellectual exercises which would ultimately lead him to Nirvana. Of the eight steps noted above the first three steps fall under physical activity; the second three under mental activity and the last two steps under intellectual discipline. All the various suggestions made by the Buddhists in regard to these steps were not new to Indian religions. The distinct contribution of Buddhism was made only in the intellectual discipline. A brief exposition of the details of the three disciplines is given below.

#### Physical Discipline (*sila*).

In Buddhism, monks and nuns as well as lay-disciples have to observe a variety of moral precepts, and this forms the first step in their spiritual progress. The physical activities fall into three divisions, viz., those pertaining to physique, those pertaining to speech and those pertaining to mind. For ordinary novices there are the famous ten commandments. They should not (1) take away the life of any being; (2) acquire any thing that is not given, (3) indulgence in sexual matters, (4) utter lies, (5) take intoxicants, (6) take food in untimely hours, (7) engage in dance, drama and music and similar activities, (8) aspire for adorning themselves with cosmetics and garlands, (9) aspire for high and pleasant couches and (10) receive gifts of gold, etc. Of these ten, the first five or eight items are the same for the lay-disciples.

*Rules for monks and nuns.*—For the monks and nuns there are not only the famous *Patimokkha* duties but also several other rules to be observed so that by observing these



duties they become absolutely fit for realising the highest truth. The observances intended for a monk fall under five groups. They are as follows :—

1. *Patimokkha-samvara*.—According to this a monk should always try to be faultless in his daily activities and should be afraid of doing anything wrong even in the slightest degree.

2. *Indriya-samvara*.—Then he has to guard against falling a victim to the sense-organs. He should keep them well controlled.

3. *Ajivaparisuddha*.—Then he should exercise strict control over eating. He should not develop a taste for food. Further he should also not persuade others to offer him gifts of food, etc.

4. *Paccayasannissita*.—He should always allow himself only of the barest necessities of life which would just be sufficient to make him fit for reaching the goal.

5. *Dhutangas*.—The thirteen rigorous practices are prescribed for some monks. It may be mentioned here that when Buddhism was in its early stages, the monks were few and they were spending their time mostly in the open as is evident from the description of four *nissayas* (states of living), viz. (1) to eat the food given voluntarily by others, (2) to wear the cloth discarded by others, (3) to spend the time at the foot of trees and (4) to use urine and excrements as medicines in case of illness. But when the number of members of the Sangha increased there was the necessity to institute the thirteen rigorous practices either for all or for those monks who wanted such practices.

These are found only in the later texts, the canonical texts however remaining silent on these matters. It is said that the Buddha did not practice these, although some of his disciples did. The Buddha was always more concerned with the mental and intellectual training than with physical discipline. The thirteen practices are as follows :—

1. To wear the clothes collected from dust heaps, etc. (*pamsukulikangam*).
2. To have only three clothes, namely, the under garment (*antaravasaka*) the upper garment (*uttarasanga*) and the spare garment (*sanghati*) (*tecivarangam*).
3. To take food collected by begging and to avoid the fourteen kinds of foods (*pinda-patikangam*).
4. To beg food from house to house without omitting any (*sapadanacarikangam*).
5. To take meal at one sitting, and not to resume seat if one has to rise in the middle of a meal (*ekasamkangam*).
6. To have only one bowl and to eat all kinds of food thrown into it (*pattapindikangam*).



7. Not to take any food after signifying the intention to finish the meal (*āhāsu-pacchabhattikāṅgam*).
8. To dwell in forests or places far removed from towns, etc. (*arannikāṅgam*).
9. To dwell under a tree and not to dwell in sheltered places (*rukklamulikāṅgam*).
10. To live in the open but permitted to seek shelter when it rains (*abbhokasikāṅgam*).
11. To live in a cemetery (*sozamikāṅgam*).
12. To use whatever seat is allotted (*yathasaṁhātikāṅgam*).
13. To spend nights sitting and not lying (*nisajjikāṅgam*).

These practices may "be severe or moderately severe or moderate." The nuns (*bhikkhunis*) are permitted to practise only eight *dhutāṅgas* omitting the five items namely 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11. A male novice can do twelve omitting the item No. 2. A female novice can do only seven of the eight prescribed for nuns omitting item No. 2. The lay-devotees should do only the two items, namely, 3 and 5. It may be mentioned here that these practices are common to almost all the religions of India, the lay followers of them observing rigorously many of the practices daily to this day.

#### Mental Discipline (*citta*).

The second step in the path to spiritual progress of the Buddhists relates mainly to the control of mind (*citta*) and to withdraw it from the worldly things and to direct it to the goal of Nirvana, as according to the Mahayanists it is only a steady mind that will comprehend the real oneness and sameness and vastness of the beings of the universe. The control of mind is achieved only by meditational exercises which make the meditator to reach the state of death (*sannavedayitanirodha*) which is called *śamadhī*. There are various kinds of *śamadhīs*, from the lowest to the highest. These meditative exercises have to be done in a particular manner which consists of the following five processes :—

- (1) Ten hindrances (*palibodhas*), (2) forty objects of meditation (*kammatthanas*), (3) the spiritual preceptor (*Kalyāṇamitta*), (4) the aspirant and (5) the successive steps in meditation.

The ten hindrances are (1) the abodes of monks (*avasa*), (2) family (*kula*), (3) gain (*labha*), (4) members of the congregation (*gana*), (5) works (*kamma*), (6) wayfaring (*addhana*), (7) relatives including the teachers (*nati*), (8) one's own sickness (*abadha*), (9) scripture (*ganātha*) and (10) miraculous powers (*iddhi*). There are other hindrances also.

The forty objects of meditation are not really forty but may be many more. In fact the teacher has to choose the objects of meditation for the aspirant. They are the following : (a) Ten *Kāśīnas* comprising the earth, water, fire, wind, the blue colour, yellow,



red, white, spot of light and the limited space. (b) Ten *Asubhas* or unpleasant objects, are the ten states through which an unceared for corpse passes before it is completely destroyed. They are, the swollen, the blue-coloured, the puffy, the limb-torn, the animal-eaten, the limb-dismembered, the limb-scattered and destroyed, the blood-covered, the worm-dwelt and the skeletal. These make the aspirant rise above doubts, love and affliction. (c) Six *Anussatis* (concepts) consists of the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, the *silas*, the making gifts (*caga*) and ways leading to rebirth as a god (*devata*). These bring peace to the aspirant and produce in him insight which leads him to arhathood. Besides these there are three other concepts (*anussatis*). They are the *marana-sati* according to which the meditator has to ponder over the fact that he is also liable to death and that his body is from head to bottom full of impurities such as hair, etc. The *Anapana-sati* which relates to the controlling of breath. The aspirant has to go to the forest to perform this. He may use the aids of counting, the following the three stages, and watching the points of contact. This leads one to develop the *dhyana*. The third *anussati* is *upasamanussati* which requires the aspirant to go to lonely place where he has to meditate on the fact that the best of all *dharmas* is the absence of attachment. (d) Four *Brahmaviharas* consist of friendliness to all beings (*metta*) compassion (*karuna*), feeling of joy at another's happiness (*mudita*) and the removal of attachment (*upekkha*). (e) Four *Aruppas* or *Samapattis* consist of meditation on the following four, the unlimited *akasa* going beyond the seen universe (*akasanancayatana*); the consciousness (*vinananancayatana*) after withdrawing his mind from the sense of space, etc.; the voidness or absence of *vinana* (*akincinnayatana*) after withdrawing his mind even from the consciousness; and the absence of perception (*nevasanna-nasannayatana*) when he gets rid of perception of all except the most subtle. (f) The disgust for food (*ahare patikulasanna*). (g) The determination of the four elements of the body (*catudhatu-savatthana*).

The proper preceptor is an essential requisite for an aspirant. He should try to get training under an Arhat. Failing this he may receive lessons from the following in the descending scale: an *anagami*, a *sakadayami*, a *sotapanna*, a *puthujjana*, a master of three *pitakas*, a master of two *pitakas*, a master of one *pitaka*, a master of one *nikaya* with its commentaries and a man of self-restraint (*lajji*).

The candidate (aspirant) must be devoid of fear, love of gain, defects and illusion and must be desirous of dedicating his life to realise the goal. He must also be prepared to do anything that his preceptor might ask him to do. He should also choose a proper place for his meditative life. The suitable time for doing meditation was after his return from his begging rounds. In selecting the candidate, the preceptor should not accept him immediately after seeing him. The candidate's mental states and physical activities should be examined closely before he was initiated. The candidates should be given such objects of meditation as best suited to his mental leanings. There are some preliminary duties like *trisaranam*, that a candidate should do before he commenced his meditative practices.





The successive steps in meditation are the following :—*Upacara* according to which the concepts are seen clearly without their defect ; *appana* by which the steadiness of mind is slowly achieved ; and the four trances which are brought about by meditating on the various objects mentioned above. The meditation on the supramundane objects consists of four higher trances called *samapattis*. The aspirant becomes free from mental activity after the fourth trance.

#### Intellectual discipline (*panna*).

After the practices dealt with above the Buddhist aspirant gets to the next step which makes him qualified to have a true view of the various objects (*panna*). But the stages of getting the true view are gradual and the truths realised are the four noble truths (*ariyasaccas*), viz., *dukkha*, *dukkha-samudaya*, *dukkha-nirodha* and the *dukkha-nirodha magga*. The former two are relatively of a lower order while the latter two are responsible for the realisation of the highest truth, viz., the removal (*nirodha*) of *dukkha*. According to the Buddhists, the relative truths mean the following: (1) *Khandhas*, (2) *Dhatus*, (3) *Ayatanas*, (4) *Indriyas* and (5) *Ariyasaccas* and the highest truth, (6) the *Paticcasamuppada* (the theory of causation).

*Khandhas*.—They are two-fold, *samskrita* or *lokiya dhatu* (objective) which includes the whole world and *asamskrita* or *lokuttara dhatu* (subjective) which includes *Akasa* and *Nirvana*. *Samskrita dhatu* is, according to the Buddhists, composed of *nama* and *rupa*. The former includes the four mental states (*nama*) of being, namely, feeling, perception, impressions produced by previous actions (*karma*) and knowledge obtained through senses; and the latter includes all the inanimate objects. These five are collectively called the five *Khandhas*. It works out that all the beings consist of five elements each without a "soul" (*Atta* or *Puggala*). The *rupa khandha* includes earth, water, fire and air of the past, present or future. *Vedana khandha* means all that is felt by a person. Though one, it is studied, sometimes under the three aspects, namely, good (*kusala*) bad (*akusala*) and indifferent (*avyakata*), but sometimes under five aspects also. *Vinnanakkhandha* is the mental faculty which understands the things. Though one, it is treated under the three aspects each of which is again studied under four spheres, viz., *kamavacara*, *rupavacara*, *arupavacara* and *lokuttara*. In all, the *vinna* element comprises of 84 items which are said to act in 14 ways beginning with the birth of a person and ending with his death. *Sannakkhandha*. By this is meant the characteristics by which a thing is known. Though one, it is associated with three *vinnanas* and the *vinna* cannot exist without the *sanna* (perception). *Sankharakkhandha* denotes the aspects of mental states by which two or more mental activities are brought together through the other three *khandhas*, *vedana*, *sanna* and *vinna*.

*Dhatus*.—The term has a variety of significance but it is applied to the six sense-organs, their objects and the six perceptions derived through them totalling to 18.



*Ayatanas* include the sense organs (internal) and other objects (external) totalling to 12 in all. Of these the first eleven belong to the *rupakhandha* which is limited and the twelfth, mind, belongs to *viññanakhanda*, which is unlimited extending over all mental states denoted by the term Dharma. In effect the Buddhists say that the *dhatu*s and the *ayatana*s have neither any substance nor any function.

*Indriyas* in Buddhism are twenty-two in number. It is said that they also do not exist in the highest sense.

*Ariyasaccas*.—These are, as detailed below, the four noble truths mentioned above which are comprehended by *sammaditthi*. *Dukkha* means that birth, etc., cause suffering. The understanding of this removes the belief in a self. *Samudaya* is due to *tanha* (desires). Knowledge of this removes the belief that there is an after life. *Nirodha* is the extinguishing of desires. It can be known by right means although it is unborn, unoriginated and uncreated. It has two aspects, namely, one bounded by the physical body and another completely freed never taking any other body. A knowledge of this removes the belief in the eternality of self. *Magga* is the eight-fold path which leads to the cessation of suffering. The knowledge of this removes the belief in non-action.

*Paticcasamuppada* or the theory of causation, is a contribution of the Buddhists to Indian philosophy according to which the worldly things are impermanent inasmuch as they are neither created by God nor a composite of eternally existing atoms. Nothing except *Nibbana* and *Akasa* is due to cause and condition. This law is identified with the Buddha and Dharma by all the Buddhists. There are the following twelve terms composing the law of causation, namely, *avijja* (ignorance), *sankhara* (impressions), *vinñana* (perception), *nama-rupa* (mind and matter), *sasayataka* (six sense-organs), *phassa* (contact), *vedana* (feeling), *tanha* (desire), *upadana* (strong attachment), *bhava* (desire for existence) and *jati* (birth). Sometimes a parallelism has been pointed out between this series and that of the Samkhya system. This series is however not intended to explain a line of evolution or origin of the world but a chain of examples to show the dependent origination (*idappaccayata*) of things. According to the Buddhists there are twenty-four relations such as *atthi*, *natthi*, *viga'a*, *avigata* and that the links are to be related in one or more of these relations. By the term *paticcasamuppada* is meant the inexorable mutual dependency of cause and effect.

#### The Sangha.

Returning to the story of the life of Buddha, after converting about sixty people in Banaras who became arhats, the Buddha sent them to different parts of the country not only to propagate the religion but also to give the benefit of arhat-hood to as many as were in a stage fit to become so. He himself went to Rajagriha where he acquired besides others, the two important disciples, namely, Sariputta and Moggallana who became later his chief disciples. Afterwards the Buddha toured to several parts of Northern India



converting year after year more and more persons to his faith. When he was at Kapilavastu, his native town, he asked Sariputta to ordain Rahula as a monk. Till then all new entrants had to be brought before the Buddha for admission into the Order. From this time onwards the *arhats* sent abroad were themselves enabled to ordain people, which greatly facilitated the expansion of the Sangha.

*Monastic rules.*—When the Sangha grew there came into being rules for admission. According to them originally a new entrant should shave off the hair on the head and moustache, put on yellow robes, salute the bhikkhus, and revere the Triratna. When the Sangha still further expanded the new entrant was made to observe more elaborate rules comprising the system called *natti-catuthakamma*. According to this the new entrant had to be presented by his *acarya* to an assembly of monks who after studying him would approve of his ordination. Then the novice was asked to observe the other rules relating to the conduct of a monk. In the case of people belonging to other sects, before they were ordained they were required to undergo training for four months. There were some exceptions to this. Persons suffering from contagious and incurable diseases and persons employed in service, robbers and such other groups of people, were not admitted.

There were two kinds of ordination for a new entrant, one *pabbaja* (adopting a homeless life), and *upasampada* (becoming a *bhikkhu*). To become a *bhikkhu* a novice must prove fit which may involve training for at least ten years. He should have an *upajjhaya* and an *acarya* both of them learned, who would gradually make him learn all the moral laws as well as the subtleties of philosophy. He should also observe the rules relating to residence, dress, articles of furniture, medicine and food. There came into existence the fortnightly meetings of monks called *uposatha* on the 14th or 15th or 18th day to discuss the Vinaya and the Dhamma as well as to recite the *Patimokkha* rules called *Bhikkhu-Patimokkha*. The meetings should be attended by all the monks present in the locality and any monk residing in it but not attending the meeting was taken to task. There was then the recitation of all the rules of the *Patimokkha* by all the members, and the purification (*pariuddhi*) of an assembly was obtained by each of the monks individually declaring that they did not commit breach of any of the rules of *Patimokkha*. There were also regulations how and when this recitation had to be performed. Although the Buddhist monks were expected to be wandering, during the rainy season of the year they may stay at one place. In regard to this also rules were framed. When the rainy season was over and the monks were about to disperse they should perform the *pavarana* ceremony which meant the confession by monks the sins of commission and omission, they might have committed during their stay at one place. This was similar to the *pariuddhi* ceremony mentioned above. There was also another ceremony called *kathina* relating to the making of robes for and their distribution to the monks.



**Nunnery.**—The Sangha became so popular that several women desired to become nuns. At their head was Mahaprajapati Gotami, the Buddha's foster-mother. Though the Buddha was averse to ordain women, he yielded to the implorations of his foster-mother and the impassioned appeal of Ananda and the order of nuns was established. But the rules for nuns were framed in a manner suitable to them. Their *Patimokkha* rules were called *Bhikkhuni-Patimokkha*.

Side by side with the rules of conduct, rules were framed for punishing those monks who swerved from them as well as rules for approving certain acts intended for the entire Sangha.

**Constitution of the Sangha.**—As regards the constitution of the Sangha, its members (*bhikkhus*) when they became residents of particular place, they as a body accepted the buildings, etc., gifted to them by devotees. These were originally meant for residential purposes of monks but later on became centres of learning. No one member of a monastic establishment was considered its head because, quite contrary to the practice that obtained in similar religious institutions of his times, the Buddha never admitted that either he was the leader of the Sangha or any one else could be one such. On the other hand, he exhorted the *bhikkhus* not to take refuge in others but to take refuge in themselves and in the Dhamma. But usually an elderly monk was chosen to be the leader at meetings of the monks. In course of time rules relating to the administration of monasteries were also framed. Most salient of the rules was that no act of the Sangha was accomplished without the consent of the assembly and this was enforced strictly. It may be remembered here that all the elaboration of activities of the Sangha came into being only gradually and not during the life-time of the Buddha. He on the other hand always insisted that both the monks and lay-disciples should betake to tread the path proclaimed by him in order to achieve salvation.

The religion propounded by the Buddha soon spread to all parts of India. This was mainly due to his personality and to the high calibre of his disciples like Sariputta and Moggallana. The kings and wealthy persons of the day began to patronise the Sangha. Some of them like Anathapindika, Jivaka, Ambapali and Visakha earned the appreciation of the Buddha himself. The religion became popular owing to its catholic views and spirit of toleration shown to the followers of other faiths. Of the several other causes which were responsible for the spread of Buddhism mention may be made of the following, namely, "internal strength of the organization, unorthodoxy of the people of Magadha, persuasive methods employed in converting people, adoption of popular dialects and above all the intrinsic merits of the religion".





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**Six leaders of other faiths.**

Owing to these qualities it was possible for the Sangha to win over the followers of other religions. It is said that during and anterior to the time of the Buddha there were several leaders of sects of whom six had large following. These six leaders were called the six *Titthiyas*. They were as follows :—

*Purna Kassapa* was the teacher of *Akriyavada* (theory of non-action) according to which the soul does not act and the body alone acts. As such the person does not earn either merit or demerit by his action. He may be said to have belonged to the school which taught " that things happen fortuitously and have nothing to do with the soul ".

*Makkhali Gosala* was first follower of Jainism of the Parsvanatha school. But later he became the leader of the Ajivakas. He believed in the doctrine of fatalism and propagated the theory that salvation was attained only by repeated births and deaths, which were unalterably fixed (*niyata*). Therefore the sufferings and happiness of beings did not depend on any cause or effect. In the Buddhist Canon this theory is called as *Ahetuka* and *Akriyaditthi*.

*Ajita Kesakambali* was a materialist and denied the existence of good or bad acts. He propagated the theory that there was no entity called soul as distinct from body. Body was composed of the four elements and it decomposed into the same elements, after death. This doctrine is called *Ucchedavada* (doctrine of annihilation) or *tam jiva tam sariravada*.

*Pakudha Kaccayana* propounded the theory that a being is composed of seven elements, the usual four together with pleasure, pain and soul, which exist eternally. According to him good or bad acts did not affect those elements. This is called *Sassatavada*.

*Sanjaya Belatthaputta* was a teacher of agnosticism. He is said to have refused to give answers to problems relating to ultimates. Even the questions bearing on the moral responsibility were left unanswered. It may be mentioned that Sariputta was first a follower of this school before he was converted to Buddhism.

*Nigantha Nataputta* was the famous Mahavira the founder of Jainism who preached that only rigorous ascetic practices could bring salvation. It may be mentioned that in the Pali texts not a word about his *Syadvada* or the *Nastatattva* has been recorded although the religion is classed along with Buddhism as *Kriyavada*.

Besides these definitely known schools which preached various other doctrines, there were sixty-two views which have been recorded in one of the Suttas as those pertaining to the experiences of a Buddhist monk. These views were met by proper explanations by the Buddha.



Having satisfactorily answered the various differing views of the leaders of other faiths in the light of his profound enlightenment, and having seen the spread of his doctrine far and wide through the agency of his devoted disciples, the Buddha entered Nirvana at Kusinagara, the City of the Mallas, on the full moon day of Vaisakha in 544 B.C.

#### **The Buddhist Councils.**

*First Buddhist Council of Rajagriha.*—After the death of the Buddha, the monks of the Sangha began to lead on easy life and consequently there was lack of discipline. Apprehending that this would lead to deterioration of the Sangha, Mahakasyapa, at the instance of the old monk Subhadda (Upananda) convened a meeting of 500 *arhats* at Rajagriha. King Ajatasatru who was then reigning there helped the leaders of the Council. Although Mahakasyapa wanted that all the old monks should co-operate with him, he could not get the help of Gavampati and Purana. Since Ananda was always with the Master when he was alive, he had to be consulted on many a point of the Law. He became an *arhat* only just before the meeting of the Council took place. It was at this time that Ananda was charged with certain lapses of conduct. Though they were insignificant and could not be considered as serious, in order to strengthen the Sangha, Ananda confessed and he was absolved of the sins. It is said that the main reasons for convening the Council was to decide the failings of Ananda and others. But by the time of the death of the Buddha, there had cropped up differences of views in the interpretation of several sayings of the Master as well as of several precepts. It was therefore necessary to ascertain the views of the Sangha on the Vinaya and the Suttas by having them recited by the most competent people in the matter. There was the *parisuddhi* of Ananda who on his confession was forgiven by the assembly. Then there followed the recitation of Patimokkha rules by Upali which was approved by the assembly. Then there was the recitation of the Suttas by Ananda. After having settled the points of difference with regard to the various rules, the assembly was disbanded. Since this was the first time when such a big assembly of monks was convened for transacting the most important business of settling the meanings of disputed rules of conduct, this First Council became important in the history of Buddhism.

It has already been mentioned that there were monks even during the time of the First Council, who had their own views regarding the interpretation of the rules and other sayings. These cleavages of the Sangha developed further in course of time. These were mainly due to the absence of a unifying force as well as due to the natural instinct of some of the very erudite amongst the monks of later day who wanted to import into the sayings of the Buddha meanings and significance that were not quite apparent in the early stages. There also came into existence separate groups amongst monks specializing in separate portions of the Canon. Since the Buddha himself countenanced in the case of certain people laxity in the observance of rules, there came into existence groups of monks who said that it was enough to follow the spirit of the Dhamma rather than its letter.



*Second Buddhist Council of Vaisali.*—In the course of about a century after the death of the Buddha the differences of views on some of the texts of the Canon reached a particular stage when some of the monks of Vesali approved ten rules of Vinaya which were not in conformity with the original rules as found in the Patimokkha. Added to that there was the set of five dogmas propounded by Mahadeva which were also not quite in keeping with the rules followed by orthodox *arhats* like Yasa of Kausambi. There was therefore the necessity to settle these differences. So a council of monks was convened at Vaisali and it was attended by 700 members of the Sangha. King Kalasoka was its patron. There was disorder at the meeting, so the decision on the matter of ten disputed Vinaya rules was left to a committee of eight members, four from the orthodox school of the West and four from the unorthodox school in the East. This committee was against the move of the Vesali monks and its decision was confirmed by the Council. The Council had thus become famous as the Second Buddhist Council. At this Council also the canonical texts were recited and confirmed as in the First Council. It is to be noted that the Second Council had no President and the disputed matter was decided by a committee, according to the *ubbalhika* (committee) procedure.

The five propositions of Mahadeva were important in that according to them the *arhats* were not perfect and they were also liable to fall down from their exalted state which was accorded to them according to the original rules of the Sangha.

*The Mahasanghikas.*—The defeated Vesalian monks were not prepared to abide by the decisions of the orthodox council, and arranged for their own council consisting of *arhats* and non-*arhats* immediately after the Second Council. They called this council as Mahasangiti and proclaimed that their decisions were quite in keeping with the teachings of the Buddha.

Thus there had come into existence two distinct schools. The orthodox members were called Sthaviravadins and the members differing from them were called the Mahasanghikas. In course of time differences cropped up not only in regard to doctrine and discipline but also in regard to the dress, etc., with the result that the Sthaviravada school was divided into eleven sects all following the doctrines of the Hinayana, and the Mahasanghikas became divided into seven sects which were the forerunners of Mahayanism.

After this Second Council the various sects of the two important schools mentioned above spread from Magadha to different countries each sect entrenching itself finally at a certain place. For instance the various sects of Mahasanghikas who had their headquarters at Pataliputra moved to the South and established themselves in the Andhra country and were called the Andhakas. The Mahisasakas moved to the West Coast of peninsular India. The Sthaviravadins or Theravadins first went to Avanti and thence to



Ceylon. The Sammitiyas or Vatsiputriyas were probably active in the northern Avanti. Similarly the Sarvasivadians went to Mathura and Gandhara and some of them, because they went further north, were called Hemavatas or Mulasarvasivadians.

*Third Buddhist Council of Pataliputra.*—When there came to exist so many sub-sects there was bound to be more differences of views not only on disciplinary rules but also on doctrinal principles, than what was known at the Second Council. These views had developed to such an extent during the time of Asoka that there are stories relating to the Emperor having purged the Sangha of its unorthodox members. It appears that the difficulty arose mainly on account of the disagreement between the Mahasanghikas and the Sthaviravadins each group considering the other as impure. So the Sthaviravadin monks had convened a Third Council at Pataliputra probably with the support of Asoka. The most learned monk of the orthodox school was Moggaliputta Tissa. He was the head of this Council while another important monk called Upagupta also played an important part. This Council, like the former two councils, heard the Canon and accepted it. It was at this time that the book entitled *Kathavatthu* was written by Tissa, which was added to the Canon. It is said that the Canon was finally settled at the Council and in that form it was taken to Ceylon by Mahinda. In Ceylon the Canon was put to writing in the 1st century B.C. After the Council was over, Tissa is said to have sent out nine missionaries to nine different countries to preach the religion, a fact which is corroborated by the inscriptions found at Nagarjunakonda.

#### Development of Buddha-bhakti.

Since the time of Asoka, the two schools of Buddhism got further split up into various sub-sects. In fact even in the *Kathavatthu* itself traces of praising the Buddha as though he was a deity are found. About that time or a little later the stories relating to the Buddha's former existences were becoming popular. It was also then that the worship of the relics of the Buddha and of his disciples became a *fait accompli* because Asoka himself is said to have broken open the stupas that were erected over the relics of the Buddha soon after his death, and distributed them to various countries where they were enshrined in stupas. The abovementioned facts show that many changes were being introduced into the old faith. As the sects moved to various countries as mentioned above, there they had to adapt themselves to local conditions even if it meant absorbing of elements of local cults and beliefs. These changes were tolerated even by the most devoted and erudite of the monks of the various schools who wanted somehow to propagate the ideals of their religion and who thought that the superficial changes would not affect its fundamental principles. It need not be mentioned that radical changes of doctrinal principles and consequently of the rules of conduct were introduced in the religion by the Mahasanghikas and their sub-sects while the Theravadins and their sub-sects on the other hand adhered to that form of the religion which is said to be the original one. The move of the former to introduce changes in the doctrine resulted in the founding of the





Mahayana school about 100 A.D. which formed the basis for the still later schools, namely, Sunyavada of Nagarjuna, Vijnanavada of the Yogacarins, the Vajrayana, the Tantrayana and the Mantrayana.

*The sects of the Mahasanghikas.*—As has been mentioned above, at the time of the Second Council the Mahasanghikas were prominent. They were the first to go out of the orthodox fold. They were divided first into three branches, namely, the Mahasanghikas, the Ekavyavaharikas and the Caityaks or the Lokottaravadins and the Haimavatas. The doctrines professed by these branches are almost common. They had their headquarters at Pataliputra but their members were scattered in North-Western, Western and Eastern India.

The later branches of Mahasanghikas whom they superseded, were Caitya and Salla schools (Purvasalla and Aparasalla) who were also known as Andhakas owing to the fact that their centre was at Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda in the Andhradesa. Here they had moved about 2nd century B.C. To these Salla schools may be added Bahusrutiya, Prajnaptivadin, Vetulyakas and Hetuvadin. These groups professed a doctrine similar to that of Sarvastivadin.

The Mahasanghikas appear to have had a separate Canon of their own references to which have been met with in the inscriptions from Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda.

The *Mahavastu*, the first volume of the Vinaya Pitaka of Lokottaravadins, in a mixed Sanskrit has come down to us.

The earlier branches, Mahasanghikas and Lokottaravadins professed Hinayanic doctrines, namely, "the four truths, eight-fold path, theory of *pratityasamutpada*, the impermanence of *skandhas*, non-existence of *atman*, theory of *karma*, the *bodhi-pakshiya dharma*, *bodhyangas* and so on. The doctrines of *dharmasunyata*, *trikaya*, the two *svaranas* (*klesa* and *jneya*), which are the essentials of Mahayanic doctrines receive little attention. The accounts of *caryas*, *bhumis* and *kahestras* appear as interpolations". The descriptions of the Bodhisattva and the Buddha are Hinayanic in character in spite of the fact that the Buddha is referred to in some places as *Lokottara* (transcendental). The Bodhisattva cult had not been developed yet. Then come the opinions regarding the *arhats*. According to the Theravadins, these were *muktas* and could not at any time fall from their states. But the Mahasanghikas, as evidenced by the five points of Mahadeva, admitted that unlike the Buddha, the *arhats* were not absolutely free and were likely to fall due to various reasons one of which might be their deeds in their past lives. About *vinana* (perception) Mahasanghikas said that by the exercise of sense organs by practising the four *ma'pas* and directing his mind to *nibbana* one can attain the latter, a position which was not granted by Theravadins.

The sense organs (*indriyas*) according to them perceive and not their perceptive faculty. The Andhakas and Theravadins hold the opposite view.



Similarly on various other points, Mahasanghikas had their views which were sometimes in agreement with those of the one or the other of the various schools.

*The sects of the Sāṃsa schools.*—According to the Sāṃsa school, the Buddhas were transcendental and there was difference between the Buddhas and the *arhats*, whereas Theravadins held that the Buddhas possessed the powers of a *Lokottara* Buddha and that the difference between the Buddhas and the *arhats* lay in that the former propounded doctrines which the latter practiced. In regard to the Bodhisattvas, Andhakas held the view that an individual from the time he developed *bodhicitta* became a Bodhisattva. From this time onwards, the Bodhisattva came to possess love and compassion towards suffering beings. Theravadins held that there was no difference between Bodhisattva and an *arhat*, the term Bodhisattva indicating merely the fact that that individual was going to become a Buddha.

According to these schools, there were subtle differences between classes of *arhats*. One class of *arhats* were not free from ignorance, another class of *arhats* acquired knowledge through instructions from others and some of them at least became *arhats* by making gifts, etc., and remaining self-possessed even at the time of their *parinibbana* acquired merit. They also held that it was only the Buddha who was completely freed. All these points were opposed to the views of Theravadins. There were other points of discussion about the merits of *arhats*, besides independent views on many other matters which were peculiar to Andhakas and other schools allied to them.

*The Mahāsakas and their sects.*—Then there were the Mahāsakas with two branches, earlier and later, and Sarvastivadins, Dharmaguptakas, Kāśyāpiyas, and Samkrantikas (also called Uttarapathakas).

The earlier Mahāsakas were in agreement with Theravadins and they also reached Ceylon after remaining for some time in South-Western India. The important doctrine of them was that everything was subject to change and that only the present existed and not "all existed" as propounded by Sarvastivadins. They also thought that the Buddha was human. Regarding other matters they had some original views, others in agreement with Theravadins and many others quite opposed to those of Sarvastivadins.

The later Mahāsakas accepted the view of the Sarvastivadins that past and future also existed. They held that the earth lasted for aeons of time.

The Sarvastivadins came into the field after Mahāsakas and Mahasanghikas. This school is different from those of Mulasarvastivadins and Vaibhashikas, although with the latter name it was well known in Northern India from about 100 A.D. This school may be traced to the Second Council. Mathura became its first seat whence it went to Gandhara and Kashmir. Its early teacher was Upagupta, who was probably the spiritual guide of Emperor Asoka. The members of this school were scattered over North India including North-Western



India and Sarnath. They had their own Canon with extensive texts written in Sanskrit. Like the other schools (leaving out Theravadins) this school also did not have the fifth Agama (Nikaya). Vasubandhu, Sanghabhadra and others wrote treatises on the doctrines of this school.

As regards the doctrine, according to this school, the constituted things may perish but their *dharma*s did not perish, whereas the Theravadins denied this. Similarly these two schools had differences of views on a few other subtle points but they agreed in general. They held the view that the Buddha was human, that the Bodhisattvas should cut away their worldly ties before they became fit for *arhat*hood, and that there were sentient beings in the world for the Buddha to have compassion on them. Regarding *arhats* the Sarvastivadins said that all of them were not perfect, a view shared by the Mahasanghikas. Similarly on the matters like *maitri* and *vijnana*, they had their own views.

The school of *Dharmaguptakas* originated probably with Purana and Gavampati of the First Council. Their Canon is attested to by a Vinaya text only. The school spread in the North-West India. The followers of the school held the views that gifts to the Sangha were more meritorious than the gifts to the Buddha; heretics could not gain the five supernatural powers; and that enlightenment comes all on a sudden, etc.

The *Kasyapiyas* branched off from the Sarvastivadins. They had a Canon. Their distinctive doctrines were that *samskāras* perished every moment, *arhats* had some imperfections, and though the past and present existed, only some of the future existed. The *Samśrantikas* and the *Sauśrantikas* also branched off from the Sarvastivadins. Their important doctrine was that *skandhamātras* were transferable just as the Sammitiyas maintained the doctrine of the transference of *pudgala*. These two views are opposed to the fundamental doctrine of the early Buddhists, namely, the disintegration of *skandhas* every moment (*kṣāṇikavāda*). Then these schools maintained that the *skandhas* ended in *nirvāṇa*. Several other independent views sometimes agreeing with similar views of the Theravadins and sometimes disagreeing with them were held by them.

The *Haimavatas* were a branch of the Sthaviras but their doctrines were allied to those of the Mahasanghikas. They also had some principles in agreement with similar ones of the Sarvastivada school, such as *arhats* have imperfections and heretics could not get the five supernatural powers.

The *Uttarapathakas* were in the North and their doctrines were a mixture of the doctrines of the Mahasanghikas and the Theravadins. This fusion of doctrines attempted by this school was in between the doctrines of Mahayana and Hinayana schools.

*Other Schools.*—Then there were the schools of the *Vātsīputriyas*, the *Dharmottariyas*, the *Bhadrāyanikas*, the *Channagarikas* and the *Sammitiyas*. All these schools finally



merged into the Sammitiyas which became the most prominent school. It is said that the author of the doctrine of this school was Mahakaccayana. It had also a separate Canon of which some portions were not different from those of the Pali Canon. The chief distinguishing feature of this school is its acceptance of an entity called *pudgala* which continues without perishing at every moment. This means that the individual is a reality. Further they had some views which agreed with similar views held by the Theravadins and some other views which corresponded to those proposed by the Sarvastivadins. For instance, the Sammitiyas like the Theravadins accepted the infallibility of *arhats* which is opposed by the Sarvastivadins. Though the *pudgala* of the Sammitiyas is not perishing every moment, it ceases to exist in Nibbana. It is along with this *pudgala* the *dharma*s also go from one existence to another.

There is then the *Vibhajyavada* school which followed the orthodox school. But the followers of this school had several doctrinal principles which are found followed by the Sarvastivadins, the Theravadins and the Mahasanghikas. The Theravadins of Ceylon called themselves as Vibhajyavadins. As this term is also found attached to a sect of the Sarvastivadins and a sect of the Bahusrutiyas, it may be presumed that the followers of the Vibhajyavada sect of each of these schools did not wholly agree with the doctrines of the main school. Some of the doctrines of this school are as follows. The *arhat* has no failings; the Buddha is always in meditation and the realisation of the four noble truths comes all on a sudden.

The *Theravada* or the *Sthaviravada* school is the most orthodox one. It had its centre at Pataliputra and then it moved to Ujjain, which became its very important centre. The activities of the school centred round Kanchipuram about the beginning of the Christian era. Finally it reached Ceylon where its stronghold was the Mahavihara of Anuradhapura. It had a set-back about the 5th century A.D. when the Mahavihara was destroyed by a king of Ceylon at the instance of the Vetulyakas whose immediate successors were the Mahayanists, whose short-lived activities in Ceylon centred round the Abhayagiri Vihara. The Pali literature of Buddhism belongs to the Theravadins. The doctrines of these people have already been indicated above under each of the other schools. A few important doctrines of this school are as follows:—

The Buddha is a human being and gets this name after the enlightenment. The Bodhisattva experiences suffering and is not self-born. The *arhats* are perfect beings and attain Nirvana. There is nothing which transmigrates from one place to another.

The survey of the various schools of Buddhism and of their doctrines shows that since the Third Council of Pataliputra, the fundamental concepts of Buddhism relating to Buddha, Arhat, etc., came to be invested with significance and meaning which tended to make the religion more and more theistic in character. The literary works produced between 200 B.C. and 100 A.D. such as the *Mahavastu* and the *Lalitavistara* contain passages describing





the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas as if they are gods. The followers of the schools like the Caityakas emphasised the worship of the stupas, etc. The sculptures from Bharhut, Sanchi and Amaravati belonging to the period from 200 B.C. to 100 A.D. show the worship of the Buddha in a symbolic form though not in the human form. The various schools that spread to North-Western India encountered a medley of communities including groups of a number of foreign communities whose cultural background was such that they saw in the Buddha a transcendental being and consequently believed in his worship.

#### Cults of the Bodhisattva and the Paramita.

It was at this time that some teachers began to emphasise the doctrine of many Buddhas and the Bodhisattva doctrine. They said that Gautama Buddha was only an emanation of an ideal and that everyone, whether a householder or an *arhat* could become a Buddha, provided he developed his spiritual powers. As a consequence of the new development there came into being a set of six or ten perfections (*paramitas*) by the practice of which a Bodhisattva attains to the various planes of a ten-plane state (*dasabhumi*), beyond which lay Nirvana. The *paramitas* (perfection in virtues) are *dana*, *sila*, *kshanti*, *virya*, *dhyana*, *prajna* (which were the original six), *upayakausalya*, *pranidhana*, *bala* and *jnana* (the four later additions). The doctrine that the practice of these virtues led one to Buddhahood and Nirvana was amply borne out by the stories relating to the former existences of the Buddha as narrated in the *Jatakas* and the *Avadanas* although many of the narratives were taken over from the already existing common Indian literature and had no special Buddhist features. Thus the cults of the Buddha and the Bodhisattva coupled with the theory according to which it is not *arhats* alone who were the perfect beings but others possessing qualities of great men also can become perfect, resulted in the formation of a separate branch called the Mahayana about 100 A.D.

*Mahayanism.*—The followers of the Mahayana considered the old form of Buddhism as a low vehicle (*Hinayana*) owing to its emphasis on asceticism and puritanical ways of living which restricted the attainment of salvation only to a few beings while the quintessence of the teachings of the Buddha was the removal of suffering of all beings and making them fit for Nirvana. Owing to the fact that the followers of the new school emphasised the latter aspect they called themselves as the Mahayanists.

The new ways of approach to the moral, psychological and metaphysical problems of the religion, propounded by the Mahayanists then came to be systematically set out in a variety of literary works produced by different authors at different periods. These came to be collected as *Mahayana Sutras*. Since the Mahayana school was not a distinct school but comprised of a number of schools, it had no separate Canon and one has to look for the doctrines of the new school in the *Sutras*. In view of the fact that already in the first



century A.D. there existed a number of such treatises, it was found necessary to take stock of these books and to settle the glaring differences of opinions amongst the different schools and sects of the new religion.

*Fourth Buddhist Council of Kashmir.*—It is said that with the above mentioned purpose in view, a council of the Buddhists was held in the Kundalavana monastery in Kashmir about 100 A.D. under the patronage of King Kanishka of the Kushan dynasty. The Council was presided over by the learned teacher Vasumitra with Asvaghosha, the famous poet and spiritual adviser to Kanishka as Vice-President. The Council was mainly concerned with preparation of the Mahāvibhāṣas or the great commentary on the Tripitaka although the deliberations of the Council might have included discussions on the doctrines of the Hinayana school in the light of the new trends. Thus it was at this Fourth Buddhist Council that the Mahayana school might be said to have received the official recognition. The fundamental doctrines of the new form were the *Paramitas*, the Bodhisattva and devotion to the Buddhas.

Of the various Mahayana Sutras nine most important ones including the *Saddharmapundarika* and the *Lalitavistara* are held in great honour in Nepal at the present day under the name of Nine Dharmas. Though all of these works deal with Mahayanism, it is the *Saddharmapundarika* which deals with the various aspects of the new religion in an exhaustive manner. Here the Buddha is elevated to a position above that of all other gods and devotion to him is said to bring Nirvana to the devotee. Here is also expounded the doctrine of the mercy of the Buddha which alone is capable of giving salvation to the disciples, the Pratyeka Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Closely allied to this text but dealing with the glorification of the Bodhisattvas are the *Karandavyuha* and the *Sukhavatiryuha*.

The texts dealing with the *Prajna Paramitas* on the other hand are philosophical in character and they deal with the perfections of a Bodhisattva, the perfection of *prajna* or wisdom being the most exalted of them. According to this, the wisdom consists of the knowledge of *Sunyata* or emptiness meaning the unsubstantiality of all phenomena. While the earlier form of the religion originated in North India, from the fact that the texts on the *Paramitas* are said to have originated in the South, the *Paramita* doctrine may be the contribution of the South.

*Sunyavada of Nagarjuna.*—The greatest exponents of the doctrine of *Sunyata*, and as such of the Mahayana, were Nagarjuna and his pupil Aryadeva. Since Nagarjuna propounded a middle path between affirming and denying, he became the founder of the *Madhyamika* school which flourished in India for over eight centuries. According to this school the *Sunyata* (emptiness) means the complete negation of the world by the exercise of wisdom. This *Sunya* stands in between existence and non-existence, eternality and impermanence and all similar pairs of extremes. This middle path may be traced to the statement attributed to the Buddha himself, viz., his was the path that avoided the two extremes and the



path which was "good in the beginning, good in the middle and good in its end." According to the Madhyamikas though there are two truths, viz., the ultimate and the conventional, at the ultimate level everything is untrue and there was nothing but emptiness. The Madhyamikas also said that the *Sunyata* means the realisation of the absolute truth as such (*tathata*). As a consequence of the doctrine of *Sunyata* there arose the following theories :— "There is not attainment or non-attainment in emptiness and therefore it is impossible to know if one has attained Nirvana." This theory is tantamount to self-extinction, because if Nirvana becomes a thing to be attained then there arises the problem of the self also the admission of which will mean distinction. Secondly the nature of person who has attained Nirvana cannot be known and therefore cannot be affirmed. This view was mainly concerned with destroying all assertions and beliefs regarding the ultimate truth. Thirdly the Madhyamikas said that one should rely on *Sunyata* or perfect wisdom. Besides these, there are various other theories encompassing all aspects of the religion.

About the 5th century A.D. there came into being two schools, namely *Prasangika* and *Svatantra* based entirely on the doctrines of the Madhyamika school of Nagarjuna. Buddhapalita and Bhavaviveka were the founders respectively of these schools. Chandrakirti (6th century A.D.) the pupil of Dharmapala of Nalanda was the chief exponent of the Prasangika school. According to the Prasangikas the *Sunyata* was intended to refute the various other views. The Svatantrikas on the other hand said that by means of arguments also some truths could be established.

The important work of the Madhyamika school is the *Madhyamika Sutra* by Nagarjuna. He also wrote the commentaries called the *Prajna-Paramita-Sutra-Sastra* and the *Dasa Bhumi-Vibhasa-Sastra*.

*Yogacara School of Asanga.*—The most important school of Mahayanism is the Yogacara school. This school was founded by one Maitreyanatha (3rd century A.D.) but its best exponents were Asanga and Vasubandhu. According to the Yogacarins, nothing exists outside consciousness (*vijnana*). Hence this school got the name *Vijnanavada*. Like the Sunyavada school, the Yogacara school also denied the reality of all phenomena. According to the Yogacarins, the ultimate truth is Bodhi (Thought) and it encompasses itself and *alayavijnana* (psychic processes). This state is realisable only by a Yogacarin, i.e., one who practices yoga. Even here, the enlightenment does not come all on a sudden but only in stages and after having gone through all the ten stages in the case of Bodhisattva. The doctrines of this school are dealt with in such books as the *Yogacarabhumi-sastra* by Asanga and the *Abhidharmakosa* by Vasubandhu. It was now, the theory relating to the Buddha's three bodies, viz., *Dharma*, *Bhoga* and *Manushi*, was perfected. In his *dharmakaya*, the Buddha is the absolute itself. In his *bhogakaya* aspect, the Buddha is in the earlier Bodhisattva stage and as a Bodhisattva he is found in all places discoursing on the truths of the religion. In his *manushi* aspect he becomes myriads of Buddhas who are all mere phantoms.



Some of the early Mahayana Buddhist works contain references to magical rituals. When yogic practices came to be associated with Mahayanism, these practices began to be performed to the accompaniment of formulae supposed to have magical potency. From about the 5th or 6th century A.D. Buddhist treatises bearing on the magical rituals (*Tantra*.) were written which in content and form resembled the Tantra works of the Saktas. Two schools called Vajrayana and Mantrayana the late offshoots of the Mahayana were responsible for the doctrines propounded here and the practices recommended.

*Mantrayanism and Vajrayanism.*—According to Mantrayana certain sets of formulae, words and syllables like “*Om Mani Padme Hum*” have great powers and by making use of them for meditative purposes one can attain salvation.

The Vajrayana (adamantine) school on the other hand preached the doctrine of the identity of the ultimate reality with the Dharma and enlightenment. That is, according to the Vajayanists, the beings are in essence adamant and by a combination of rites and *mantras* one can get back to his original adamant state which is never destroyed although it cuts everything else. Consequent on the development of rituals, the literature bearing on the proper ways of practice and the means to be adopted became voluminous. In course of time the ritualistic practices became abnoxious and disgusting although they had the support of the texts of the school. This was due to the fact that the followers of the school wanted to approximate to the sublime mystic experiences and monistic philosophy found recorded in their scriptures, even on the physical plane. According to the Buddhist Tantras the Buddha was the all-encompassing and omnipresent force and no longer a transcendental spiritual reality. Consequently all the things of the universe are not external to the Buddha. All that the follower of this school is to do to get enlightenment is to realise that he is the Buddha and the cosmos. This enlightenment is brought about not by means of discussions and reasoning but by means of actions of mystical value. The old doctrines which explained the ultimate reality as the inexplicable Nirvana, the one reality of emptiness, the Bodhi or the consciousness have all been given up retaining the concept that the world is the manifestation of the Buddha's *dharmakaya*. The old idea of self-extinction has been explained by the new idea of considering that all the beings are nothing but the manifestation of an eternal principle of life.

[ In accordance with such a philosophical outlook the followers of the Tantras began to propound the theory that there is the one cosmic Buddha called Adi Buddha. It is this Buddha that really possesses the five *skandhas* each of which is presided over by a Buddha called the Dhyanī Buddha. These five Buddhas are Vairocana, Akshobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitabha and Amoghasiddhi. Each of these is described as possessing a colour and other qualities distinctive to him. From each of them emanate a Bodhisattva and a human Buddha each united with his consort. Thus there came into existence





numerous gods and goddesses making up a huge pantheon, the cause of all being the Buddha himself. These developments in the religion were responsible to make it a monotheistic religion. Side by side with these there was also the development of the cult of the female principle, according to which Tara and other female deities of the Buddhist pantheon were conceived as very important in the religion. Some of them even became the mothers of the Buddhas, but most of them are considered to be a'ways in union with their consorts, a concept which has given rise to the making of numerous images where the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are shown in closest embrace with their female counterparts, representing the great philosophical concept that the highest truth has to be conceived as a subtle, incomprehensible and inscrutable combination of the universal masculine and feminine principles. As it is not possible for all to grasp this subtle truth underlying the concept and act up to it, the practices which resulted out of the new development became barbarous. Owing to this and similar disgusting features the religion itself had to disappear from its native country.

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## BUDDHIST LITERATURE.

Summarised from Dr. M. Winternitz's work by P. R. Srinivasan.

### General.

Originating in the 6th century before Christ the religion of the Buddha or the Enlightened One has had a long and chequered career throughout the 2,500 years of its existence. During this long period Buddhism, like other living religions, has been evolving with the result it has become a "family of religions and philosophies." Very early it became divided into two distinct schools. "The oldest and probably nearest to the original teaching is the Theravada known as the Hinayana (little vehicle) and this today is the religion of Ceylon, Burma, Siam and Cambodia. The later Mahayana (large vehicle) includes the rest of the Buddhist world (viz.) Tibet and its neighbours, and Mongolia, China (partly), Korea and Japan. But the peculiarities of Tibetan Buddhism, which covers Tibet, Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal, make it a school on its own, and the same applies to the Zen School of Japan."

The range of subjects of Buddhism "includes religion, advanced philosophy, mysticism, metaphysics, psychology, magic, ritual and art." Hence the enormity of the total literary output of the Buddhists, who hailed from all the countries mentioned above. Of the vast numbers of literary works only a portion has come down to us. The literature of Buddhism now exists in the following collections:—

1. The Pali Tipitaka which, in its three divisions, contains the sacred books of one of the Hinayana Schools, the Theravada, especially of Ceylon. The sacred books of other Hinayana schools are "partly preserved in Sanskrit and Chinese but a greater number of them is lost." 2. Non-Canonical Pali literature. (3) Buddhist literature in pure and mixed Sanskrit: (a) Independent books. (b) The Chinese translations which in 518 A.D. numbered 2,113 volumes while now the number is 2,184 volumes. (c) The Tibetan translations: (i) *The Kanjur* which is a collection of the Sutras in 100 or 108 volumes. (ii) *The Tanjur* which is a collection of commentaries and Sastras in 225 volumes, distributed in 3 parts. (d) Fragments of Sanskrit manuscripts and fragments of manuscripts in other local languages discovered in some places in Chinese Turkestan.

### The Pali Canon.

None of the books date back to the time of the Buddha because he did not leave behind any writings. It is likely that isolated texts of the Buddha's sayings, speeches and poems might have been compiled by some of the prominent disciples of the Buddha, adding some of their own compositions to it. It is said that immediately after the death of the Buddha the First Council of monks as held at Rajagṛha to establish a Canon of the Dhamma (religion)



and the Vinaya (discipline of the Order). The Canon, in its nucleus form, as decided upon in this Council was probably transmitted orally according to the ancient Indian practice.

Though the Second Council of Buddhist monks held at Vaisali 100 years after the death of the Buddha dealt mainly with the ten heresies, according to the Mahavamsa of Ceylon, then the doctrine was also revised. Probably the nucleus collection of texts formed the basis of discussion at this council.

During the time of Asoka, there was held at Pataliputra, the Third Council presided over by Tissa Moggallputta. A real Canon of texts is said to have been compiled. Probably this Council was preceded by a great assembly of dissentients known as Mahasanghikas who disputed the canonical texts that have come down to them orally.

According to Ceylon chronicles the Canon as fixed at the Third Council was taken by Mahinda (Mahendra) the son or brother of Asoka, to Ceylon where he spread Buddhism. But only during the period of king Vattagamani (27-17 B.C.) it was put into writing. This Canon, as it has come down to us, consists of the following three *pitakas* (baskets)—hence called the *Tipitaka*—three classes of texts:—They are (1) Vinayapitaka (basket of the discipline of the Order). (2) Suttapitaka (basket of the Suttas), which is of five collections called Nikayas and which deals with the points of religion (*dhamma*). And (3) Abhidhammapitaka (basket of the higher subtleties of the doctrine) which deals more elaborately with the *dhamma*. It is noteworthy that there is frequent mention made only of Sutta and Vinaya, but not of Abhidhamma, in these texts themselves, which may mean that only the former two *Pitakas* were authoritative for some time.

The Canon is said to contain nine *angas* or limbs, viz. (1) *Sutta*, (2) *Geyya* (3) *Veyyakarana*, (4) *Gatha*, (5) *Udana*, (6) *Itivuttaka*, (7) *Jalaka*, (8) *Abbhutadhamma* and (9) *Vedalla* (teachings in the form of questions and answers). This division is nothing but a subject-wise classification. Besides, the *Buddhavacanam* (the word of the Buddha) in the form of speeches, and rules of the order, also forms a part of the Canon. That the various texts were learnt by rote by monks who recited them as and when necessary is abundantly borne out by the fact that there were among monks Suttantikas, Dhammakathikas and Vinayadharas.

The language of the Tipitaka is called Pali, the literary language of the Buddhists of Ceylon and this has developed out of a variety of Indo-Aryan dialects but leaning strongly towards a dialect of Magadha.

As regards the early date of the texts of the Canon the following bear witness:—

1. Asoka's edict at Bairat (or Bhabru) of 249 B.C. mentions the titles of at least seven of the texts of the Canon. Further the same edict has the sentence "All that Lord Buddha has said is well said" is almost the same as the sentence in Anguttara Nikaya III.



2. Inscriptions of Bharhut (2nd century B.C.) and Sanchi (1st century B.C.) refer to Buddha legends similar to those in a few of the Pali Suttas.

3. Most of the labelled Jataka sculptures of Bharhut have been traced in the Jataka book of the Tipitaka.

4. In some of the votive inscriptions of those places the expressions such as *petakini santika*, *sulantikini*, etc., occur.

5. Above all, the Milindapanha (about 97 B.C.) has the earliest reference to Pitakattaya and to Nikayas. The Pali and Sanskrit texts are mutually corroborative. The Pali texts, however, surpass all other texts of Buddhist literature not only as the basis for a proper understanding of Buddhism but also from the point of view of literature.

Now the divisions and subdivisions of each of the *Pitakas* are as follows :—

*Vinayapitaka*.—The nucleus of this *Pitaka* is the *Patimokkha*, a confession formula to be recited by monks every fortnight on the full moon and new moon days at the Uposatha ceremony. It contained 152 rules originally but was later on extended to 227. It is not as such included in the Canon but finds a place in the *Suttavibhanga*, a commentary on the *Patimokkha*, which commentary is included in the Canon. This *Pitaka* comprises the following :—

- (a) *Suttavibhanga* : (1) *Mahavibhanga*, (2) *Bhikkhunivibhanga*.
- (b) *Khandhakas* : (1) *Mahavagga*, (2) *Cullavagga*.
- (c) *Parivara* or *Parivarapatha*.

The *Mahavibhanga* is in eight chapters. The *Bhikkhunivibhanga* is the commentary on the *Patimokkha* code for nuns.

The *Khandakas* deal with the arrangements of the Sangha. The *Mahavagga* in its ten chapters deal with the special rules for admission, etc. The *Cullavagga* has twelve chapters; the first nine deal with the disciplinary methods in lesser matters; the tenth deals with duties of nuns; and the eleventh and twelfth chapters contain the stories relating to the Buddhist councils held at Rajagṛha and Vaisali. In the *Khandhakas* are also added some old formulas (*Kammavaca*).

In general, the subject matter of the *Vinaya* is the *Sangha* (the Order). Very interesting and important stories relating to the conversion of Yasa, Sariputta, and Moggallana; to the First Sermon of the Buddha at Sarnath and the fire sermon; to the conversion of Rahula; to the gift of Anāpindika; to the founding of the order of nuns at the request of Mahaprajapati Gotami the Buddha's foster-mother; and to Devadatta, the cousin of the Buddha who caused the first schism in the Sangha. Further, several interesting features of the social life of those ancient times are known from these texts.





It is interesting to note that in form and content the Vinayapitaka has some resemblance to the Brahmana portions of the Vedas.

The *Parivara*, is probably a work of a Sinhalese monk of a later period. It comprises 19 shorter texts in the form of questions and answers, and is similar in content to the Vedic *Anukramanis*.

*Suttapitaka*.—It is the source-book for Buddhism and it contains the greatest literary works of the religion. It consists of the following five *Nikayas*: (a) *Dighanikaya*, (b) *Majjhimanikaya*, (c) *Samyuttanikaya*, (d) *Auguttaranikaya*, and (e) *Khuddakanikaya*.

Of these the *Khuddakanikaya* comprises the following:—(1) *Khuddakapatha*, (2) *Dhammapada*, (3) *Udana*, (4) *Itivuttaka*, (5) *Suttanipata*, (6) *Vimanavathu*, (7) *Petavathu*, (8) *Theragatha*, (9) *Therigatha*, (10) *Jataka*, (11) *Niddesa*, (12) *Patisambhidamagga*, (13) *Apadana*, (14) *Buddhavamsa* and (15) *Cariyapitaka*.

The contents of the first four *Nikayas* are in the form of dialogues or speeches by the Buddha or by his disciples and are in prose interspersed with *gathas* (verses) here and there.

(a) *Dighanikaya* (collection of long sermons).—It consists of 34 Suttas, detailing points of the doctrine, in the three following books:—(1) *Silakkhandavagga*, (2) *Mahavagga* and (3) *Patikavagga*.

In these works we have not only matters relating to the *sila*, *samadhi* and *pañña* but also views of different philosophical schools as well as views of prominent non-Buddhist teachers and founders of sects. Most important of the Suttas of this text is the *Mahaparinibbana Sutta* which probably contains the words of the Buddha himself uttered during the last stages of his life. As a whole this *Nikaya* is not the work of a single author. Corresponding to this there is in Chinese the *Dirghagama* where the Suttas are arranged in a different order.

(b) *Majjhimanikaya* (collection of medium-sized Suttas).—It consists of 155 shorter Suttas which deal with discourses on the religion. Here are found interesting dialogues and myths. This is also not the work of a single author.

(c) *Samyuttanikaya* (collection of grouped discourses).—It consists of 2,889 individual Suttas distributed in 56 groups (*Samyuttas*), which are again arranged in 8 *Vagga* or divisions. The contents of the Suttas embrace all branches of Buddhism, some of the pieces being fine examples of poetry. Of the *Samyuttas* the following are of interest:—

1. *Moggallana-Samyutta* (No. XL) where the legends of the great disciple of the Buddha and a few of his speeches are found.

2. *Sacca-Samyutta* (No. LVI) which deals with the four Noble Truths (*saccas*) and which also includes the famous *Dhammacakkapavattana-Sutta* (No. LVI, 11).



(d) *Anguttaranikaya* (collection of sermons arranged in ascending numerical order).—It consists of at least 2,308 Suttas which are arranged in several Vaggas (divisions) which are again grouped into eleven *Nipatas* (sections). The subjects treated in these sections are peculiar. The first Nipata (Ekanipata) deals with things of which only one exists; the second Nipata, similarly, deals with the things of which only two exist and so on.

This *Anguttaranikaya* has numerous Suttas and Gathas in common with the other Nikayas. Here also we find the Buddha being deified and considered as the fountain-head of all truth; probably this formed the basis for the *Abhidhammapitaka*.

In general, among the four Nikayas there is unity of style and language, in spite of the repetitions which are due to the practical needs of the monks. Though they cannot go back to the earliest time of the Buddhist writing there are very ancient elements as well as more recent texts.

These Nikayas show the teaching method of the Buddha which is in the form of dialogues and parables and similies some of which possess high literary flavour and artistic value. Some of the parables and stories are of importance for the history of social life of those times.

(e) *Khuddakanikaya* (collection of the smaller pieces).—As mentioned above it comprises the 15 texts detailed below. Of these, however, four texts not recognised in Ceylon, are accepted by the Burmese; and in the 1894 Siamese edition, eight of them are not included. Though it is the fifth Nikaya, it is sometimes classified with *Abhidhammapitaka*. The contents and character of the various texts differ widely. From the famous Sutta in which the Buddha prophesies the decay of the religion, it may be concluded that these texts were compiled at a later period. This Nikaya as a whole is not found in the collection of Chinese Agamas, but many of the texts of this Nikaya are included in other collections. Now we shall notice briefly the texts of this Nikaya:—

1. *Khuddakapatha*.—It has nine texts which are a kind of Mantras which a novice should know before he knows the other texts. Of the Suttas the *Mangala-Sutta* and the *Metta-Sutta* are among the noble ones.

Seven of the nine texts are used at the Buddhist Paritta ceremony or *piri* (as known there) in Ceylon. (It may be noted that a small collection of Suttas, from the *Suttapitaka*, called *Paritta* or *Maha-Paritta*, is used for exorcisms in Burma. This is better known among the people there, than any other Pali book.)

2. *Dhammapada* (religious sentences).—Owing to its profound moral value this work is the best known throughout the countries. It is also repeatedly translated and much quoted and held in high esteem. In Ceylon it has been in vogue for ages, and



the Ceylon Buddhist monks know it by rote. It is an anthology of sayings on the ethical doctrine of Buddhism. Here are 423 verses grouped into several Vaggas. Some of the most famous sayings are found here, a few of which belong to the common source of Indian wisdom. Half of the verses are found in the other texts of the Canon. In the later commentaries on these verses are found interesting narratives.

3. *Udana* (collection of pithy sayings).—It is divided into 8 Vaggas each having 10 Suttas in verse and prose in which the Buddha is said to recount some narratives of his own time, which glorify the Buddhist ideal of life, etc.

4. *Itivuttaka* (sayings beginning with the words "Thus spoke the Buddha").—It consists of 112 short Suttas in prose and verse, the language of which is not excessively verbose. Prose passages are more beautiful, and they rise to lofty heights on the Metta (friendliness to all beings). Some of the passages may be traced to the Buddha himself.

5. *Suttanipata* (section of discourses).—It consists of five Vaggas, namely, 1. *Uragavagga*, 2. *Culavagga*, 3. *Mahavagga*, 4. *Atthakavagga* and 5. *Parayana*.

The first four Vaggas have short poems and the fifth is a long poem with 16 shorter parts. Asoka's Bhabru edict mentions probably three of these texts. Language and subject-matter make the texts date from the beginning of Buddhism. Next to *Dhammapada*, this work is the most frequently quoted one. Here the religion is akin to old Brahmanism. Here are allusions to Brahmanical ideals. Here are passages reminding us of similar ones in the *Bhagavadgita* and the *Puranas*.

6. *Vimananatthu* (stories of the divine palaces); and

7. *Petavatthu* (ghost stories).—In these two short works, which appear to be late, the Karma theory is expounded not in a pleasing way. Stories about hell and heaven find place here. Though some passages are ancient, generally speaking these are among the dullest works of monk-poetry.

8. *Theragatha* (songs of the elders).—It consists of 107 poems with 1,279 stanzas; and

9. *Therigatha* (songs of the lady elders).—It consists of 73 poems with 522 stanzas. These two collections of poems are attributed to certain monks and nuns respectively. The poems by monks abound in descriptions of nature primarily forest scenery, while the poems by nuns give pictures of life. For beauty and force there are ranked with the best examples of the Indian lyric poetry.

10. *Jatakas* (stories of former births of the Buddha).—The original Pali version of this is lost. All that we know about the *Jatakas* is derived from the *Jatankathavannana*, a commentary on them by an unknown Sinhalese author who based



his work on an earlier commentary called *Jatakathakatha*. (The *Atthakathas* in general are said to have been written in Pali in Ceylon immediately after the Canon was brought there, then translated into Sinhalese from which again they were translated into Pali.) Some of the Gathas of the commentary may be old.

The commentary consists of 22 sections (*Nipatas*) with a peculiar arrangement of verses. There are more than 500 Jatakas in this. But usually the number is said to be 550 of which several are actually repetitions. The story form (stories of the present and the past) is adopted here and the contents are fairy tales and fables.

It is to be noted here that the oldest examples of sculpture of historical period, from Bharhut dating from second century B.C. show bas-reliefs of Jataka stories with their appropriate labels and this is proof enough that in some form or other the Jatakas existed earlier than second century B.C. Whatever it is, this commentary is the only book of the Jataka text known and is extremely valuable for the history of Indian literature.

11. *Niddesa* (explanations).—It is a commentary on some sections of the *Suttanipats*. It consists of the following two parts:—(a) *Maha-Niddesa* which is a commentary on the *Atthavagga*. (b) *Culla-Niddesa* which is a commentary on the *Khaggavisana-Sutta* as well as the *Parayana*. Probably this text of commentaries was an ancient one; hence it finds a place in the Canon. Here grammatical and lexical explanations are treated along with explanation of the dogma.

12. *Patisambhidamagga* (the path to analysis).—It has three large sections each containing 10 treatises dealing with some important points of Buddhist doctrine.

13. *Apadana* (heroic or glorious deed).—Its counterpart in Buddhist Sanskrit literature is *Avadana*. Like the Jatakas here also are stories of the past and present, but while the Jatakas treat mostly of the lives of the Buddha, the Apadanas, as a rule, deal with the stories of an Arhat or saint. These are entirely in verse. The main divisions are the *Thera-Apadana* and the *Theri-Apadana*. The Apadana text is one of the latest texts of the Canon.

14. *Buddhavamsa* (genealogy of the Buddhas).—It is also a late addition to the Canon. Here legends of the 24 Buddhas are told in a poetical way.

15. *Cariyapitaka*.—It contains 35 Jatakas in verse and they are introduced to show which *Paramitas* (perfections) the Bodhisattva possessed in the various lives of his. Most of these are like similar stories in the Jataka book. The doctrine of Paramita does not appear in the earlier portions of the Canon.





*Abhidhammapitaka*.—Abhidhamma means higher religion or metaphysics. This text is comparatively late because many of the passages are to be traced to the two other *Pitakas*. Some sects revere this most. In Burma numerous works were written on this *Pitaka* and even today the study of this *Pitaka* is continued. It consists of the following books :—

1. *Dhammasangani* (compendium of dhammas).—It deals with physical conditions and phenomena and is intended for monks in an advanced stage. In Ceylon the monks honour this much.

2. *Vibhanga* (classification).—It is in continuation of the above book with a few new formulas and categories.

3. *Dhatukatha* (discourse on the elements).—It is a short text of 14 chapters dealing with "elements".

4. *Puggalapannatti* (description of human individuals).—It is related to the texts of the Suttapitaka in form and contents.

5. *Kathavatthū* (subjects of discourses).—It is an important book on Buddhism. It is also the only book of the Canon attributed to a definite author, viz., Tissa Moggaliputta, the President of the Third Council of Pataliputra. It has 23 sections each of which is in a question and answer form.

6. *Yamak* (double questions).—It is so-called because here all the questions are presented and explained in two ways.

7. *Paṭṭhana-Pakarana* (book of causal relationships).—It is in two parts, namely, (a) *Tika-Paṭṭhana* and (b) *Duka-Paṭṭhana*. It is devoted to the investigation of the 24 kinds of relationships between the corporeal and physical phenomena.

#### Non-Canonical Pali Literature.

A great majority of the texts of the Canon were produced in India. But except the *Mūlindapanha*, most of the non-canonical Pali works were due to the monks of Ceylon. Some of the independent works are as follows :—

1. *Mūlindapanha* (questions of Mūlinda or Menander).—It records the conversation between a king of the North-Western India and a Buddhist monk called Nagasena. The discussion is about the Buddhist doctrine and it is carried on by means of beautiful parables. It consists of seven books of which the first three are earlier than the rest. In the latter parts of the book we find a low conception of the doctrine and a developed cult of the Buddha. In style it is more advanced than the Canon. It may have been written in the 1st century A.D.



2. *Netti-Pakarana* (book of guidance to the true religion).—It gives a connected account of the teaching of the Buddha. It is attributed to Mahakaccana, the disciple of the Buddha, but it is a late work.

3. *Petakopadesa* (instructions of the students of the *Pitakas*).—It is in continuation of the above.

Of the non-canonical Pali literature commentaries form a great portion. Amongst these is the one noticed below :—

*Nidanakatha*.—Here the life story of the Buddha is presented in a connected way. This has several features similar to those found in Sanskrit Buddha legends. Both may be based on a common ancient source. It may be dated back to a time when Mahayana literature was little developed.

*Buddhaghosa's works*.—The books given below being mainly commentaries on the canonical works were written by the famous Buddhaghosa of Ceylon. Though his contribution to Buddhist philosophy is not much yet he was very learned and erudite. He lived in the 5th century A.D. To this day he is held in great respect by the Buddhists of Ceylon, Burma and Siam. He is said to have based his commentaries on the *Atthakathas* of the great monastery of Anuradhapura.

1. *Visuddhimagga* (path to complete purification).—From the fact that the author frequently refers to this work in his other works, it may be taken that he began his writings with this work. His style is clear and lucid. The stories are strewn with interesting parables. 2. *Jataka* commentary. 3. *Commentary on the Dhammapada*. 4. *Commentary on the Abhidhamma*. 5. *Atthasalini*. 6. *Papancaasudani*. 7. *Samangalavilasini*. 8. *Manorathapurani* and others.

After Buddhaghosa, Dhammapala came and he wrote commentaries on the texts of the Canon left out by Buddhaghosa. Like the latter, he also was attached to the great monastery of Anuradhapura. Both have same conception and same way of treating the subject *Paramattha-Dipani* (elucidation of the true meaning is a commentary by him, on some of the texts of *Khuddakanikaya*). Other Sinhalese monks also wrote much, for instance the commentary on the *Kathavatthu*. The historical introductions of the *Atthakathas*, which contain valuable material for the history of the Sangha, were written by them. Early periods treated in the introduction were almost mythical while the later periods were really historical. The following are the two important chronicles of Ceylon of importance to the history of literature and religion :—

1. *Dipavamsa*.—The traditions of the *Atthakathas* were utilised in the preparation of this book by an unknown author who lived in the 4th-5th century A.D. His method was to follow the model of *Atthakathas*. 2. *Mahavamsa*.—It is an ornate poem. Mahanama, the author of this work lived in the 5th century A.D. Here the author's capacity as a poet



is well displayed. It now consists of over 90 chapters. Of these the work of Mahanama stops with chapter XXXVII, 50. The remaining chapters, collectively called as *Ulavamsa*, were added during later times by various authors. The first addition was written by Thera Dhammakitti during the reign of King Parakramabahu (1240-1275). 3. *Mahavamsa-Tika*.—Is a commentary on the *Mahavamsa*, of greater importance than the above. It was written between 1000 and 1250 A.D. It is not only exegetic and dogmatic but has a number of myths and legends. Here the materials from the Atthakathas as well as from the commentaries of Buddhaghosa are used.

The *Boddivamsa* by monk Upatissa (11th century), the *Dathavamsa*, in partly Sanskritised Pali by monk Dhammakitti (13th century), the *Thupavamsa*, in Pali and Sinhalese languages, by a certain Vacissara and the *Rasavahini* translated from Sinhalese by Ratthapala were other works of Ceylon. These were based on the earlier works. They begin with the story of Dipankara Buddha and end with the history of the sanctuaries of which they treat. A Buddhadatta is the author of a commentary on the *Buddhavamsa* and of comprehensive works on Abhidhamma and Vinaya. *Anagata-vamsa* is another work.

*Burma*.—In Burma Pali literature developed only after the 11th century A.D. Works similar to the above were written there also. But Burma is especially devoted to Abhidhamma. The following are some of the important works :—

1. *Khudda-Sikkha* (on rules) by Dhammasiri.
2. *Mula-Sikkha* (on rules) by Mahasami (both this and the above of a later period than the 5th century).
3. *Deematika* (a substitute for Vinayapitaka).
4. *Kanikkhavitaraṇi* (another such substitute).
5. *Sarasangaha* (on doctrine) by Siddhattha a pupil of Buddhappiya.
6. *Dhammasangaha* (on doctrine) by Dhammakitti (13th-14th century A.D.).
7. *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha* (important manual on psychology and ethics) by Anuruddha (12th century).
8. *Namarupapariccheda* (a philosophical poem) by Anuruddha.
9. *Pancagati-Dipana* (on hells, and other worlds).
10. *Lokadipasara* (on the same subjects) by Medhamkara (14th century).
11. *Parami-Mahasataka* (on Paramitas) by a Dhammakitti.
12. *Saddhammopayana* (on doctrine and ethics).
13. *Pajja-Mathu* (in praise of Buddha) by Buddhappiya (13th century).
14. *Telakataha-Gatha* (on the religion) 12th century.
15. *Jinalamakara* (Buddha legend) by Buddhārakkhita (1156 A.D.).



16. *Chakrasadhatuvamsa* (on hair relics).
17. *Gandhavamsa* (history of books) by Nandapanna (17th century).
18. *Sasanavamsa* (history of the doctrine) by Pannasami (1861 A.D.).
19. *Vessantara-Jataka* by Tipitakalamkara (1593 A.D.).
20. *Rajadhiraja-Vilasini* (on Jatakas) (about 1780 A.D.).

In Ava were produced the following two books both having been based on the Jatakas. 1. *Buddhalamkara* by Silavamsa (15th century). 2. Versions of Jatakas by Ratthasara (15th century).

#### Buddhist Literature in pure and mixed Sanskrit.

While the Pali texts belonged to one Buddhist sect, the Theravādins, the other schools and sects had their texts in pure and mixed Sanskrit. The learned monks of India who studied in Taxila and Nalanda who went to Tibet and China, learnt the languages of these countries and translated into them the Sanskrit works. Several foreign travellers came to India, learnt Sanskrit and translated works in it into their native languages, e.g., Hsuan-Tsang. Not only fragments of manuscripts of works in Sanskrit but also fragments of manuscripts of translations of Sanskrit works in local languages have been discovered in many places in Central Asia. Some of the texts in Sanskrit, of which the originals are lost, are preserved in Tibetan and Chinese translations. A major portion of the Buddhist Sanskrit literature is Mahayana or Mahayana-influenced in character. There are also a number of Hinayana texts.

The Sarvastivāda school of Hinayana which was popular in Kashmir, Gandhara, Central Asia, Tibet and China, had a Canon of its own in Sanskrit. And this is now known only from the fragments of manuscripts discovered in Central Asia, from quotations found in other Sanskrit works and from Chinese and Tibetan translations. I-tsing (700-712) translated the principal texts of the school from Sanskrit into Chinese. But there were works dating from the second century B.C. In the Mathura lion capital inscription one Buddhīa is mentioned as a Sarvastivādin acarya.

Between the Pali and Sanskrit canonical texts there is much similarity suggesting their common origin and much difference due to local influences.

*Vinayapitaka*.—Fragmentary manuscripts of Pratimokṣa-Sūtra and other Sanskrit texts of this *Pitaka* were discovered in Central Asia as well as a few in Nepal, which can be reconstructed from Chinese and Tibetan translations.

Fragments of Śikṣas and Saṅghakarmas, of this *Pitaka*, were also found in Central Asia.





*Sutrapitaka*.—The Nikayas in Sanskrit are called the Agamas. Again fragments of the Agamas have been found in Central Asia. Comparison of Pali Nikayas with Chinese Agamas shows differences as well as points of agreement, which suggest their having been based on the same original material. The *Kshudraka Agama* contained a number of texts corresponding to the Pali texts. There is no work corresponding to the *Suttanipata* in the Sanskrit Canon, but many of the texts find place in other books. There was also a Sanskrit *Dharmapada* known from fragments of manuscripts from Central Asia. But these may also belong to the *Udana-Varga*. There were also Jatakas. The Abhidharmas of the Chinese Tripitaka have nothing in common with the Pali text.

The Canons of other sects are not known at all.

*Mahavastu* (great subjects).—It is still a very important book of the Hinayana school and is said to be based on the text of the Lokottaravadins. The subject matter is the life of the Buddha. It tells the history of the Sangha. It contains a number of Jatakas and narratives. Though of the Hinayana school, the texts like the *Buddhanusmriti*, like a *stotra* to Vishnu, savours of the Mahayana religion. Nevertheless it contains important old traditions and versions of texts. The nucleus of the work may go back to the 2nd century B.C. as its language which is mixed Sanskrit was a dialect spoken in the Northern India then.

*Lalitavistara* (detailed narration of the sport of the Buddha).—It is a very sacred Mahayana text although its nucleus might be traced to a life history of the Buddha belonging to the Sarvastivada school. The exaggerated accounts relating to the conception and birth of the Buddha as found here make it differ from other texts. Its composition is not unified and must have been due to many authors of different dates. Nevertheless from the fact that several Gandhara sculptures of early centuries of the Christian era depicted scenes as described in this book, it may be dated to those times. It is a very important source for ancient Buddhism. Probably this paved the way for such works on the life of the Buddha as the *Buddhacarita*. It may be mentioned that the beautiful sculptures of Borobudur (9th century) were done with the help of a version of this book.

*Buddhacarita* (life of the Buddha).—It was written by the poet Asvaghosha who was at the court of Kanishka (1st-2nd century A.D.) and who probably laid the foundations of Mahayana by his emphasis on the devotion to the Buddha in spite of his leanings towards the Sarvastivada school.

This book is an actual epic of the Buddha written by a real poet and a model composition for language, style and arrangement. It is, according to Chinese and Tibetan translations, in 28 cantos but in Sanskrit it stops with the 17th. It was completed by one Amritananda about the beginning of the 19th century.



*Saundaranandakavya*.—It is another work of Asvaghosha. It is devoted to the preaching of the doctrine. Old expressions are met with here. Beginnings of Mahayana are found. Allusions to several Brahmanical legends are found here and in the above work.

*Vajrasuci* (diamond needle).—Though ascribed to Asvaghosha, it is not his and its date is doubtful. It is devoted to the refutation of the Brahminical caste system.

*Mahayanasaddhotpada*.—It is a philosophical work erroneously attributed to Asvaghosha.

*Gandistotra-Gatha*.—A work probably by Asvaghosha.

*Sariputra-Prakarana*.—It is a drama attributed to Asvaghosha but was really written by his junior contemporary Kumāralata. Fragments of this work were discovered in Turfan. In this work king Kanishka plays a part, hence it may be dated to the 1st-2nd century A.D. It contains much interesting information on other religions as well as on scripts and the arts.

Matriceta was a poet of great learning. He was probably older than Asvaghosha. The following works of his have come down to us.

*Maharaja-Kanika-lekha*, a letter in 85 verses on the leading of the moral life. This has come down in the Tibetan.

*Catuk-Sataka Stotra* and *Satapancasatika Stotra* have come down in fragments. There are translations of these. Asanga, Vasubandhu and Dignaga and I-tsing were all admirers of Matriceta.

*Maitreyavyakarana* by Vaibhashika Aryacandra is also of the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D. There is an incomplete manuscript of this. But translations of it into Chinese, Tibetan and Central Asian languages have come down.

*Jatakamala* was by Aryasura who belonged to the same school but lived about the 4th century A.D. It has 34 Jatakas in illustration of Paramitas of the Bodhisattva. This book is intended for preachers.

*Padyacudamani*.—It is a work not of Asvaghosha but of an anonymous author.

*Avadanas*.—Some texts of Avadana are Hinayana while others are Mahayana. Like the Jatakas the Avadanas are also sermons and treat of stories arising out of Karma.

*Avadanasataka* (100 avadanas).—It is the oldest of this class of texts and may be dated to about the second century A.D. It belongs to the Hinayana school and here the worship of the Buddha is inculcated and not that of the Bodhisattva. A number of narratives from this occur in other Avadana collections and few also in the Pali Apadanas.



*Karma-Sataka*.—It is an old work and is similar to the above. It is available only in Tibetan translation.

*Dasanglun*.—It is also an Avadana text available in Tibetan translation, the original Sanskrit text has not come down.

*Divyavadana*.—It is a later work than the Avadana Sataka. It is in the Hinayana spirit, but most of the stories can be traced to other works. Some stories date back to the second century A.D. but as a whole it belonged to the fourth century A.D. The earliest stories are those contained in chapters 26 to 29. These parts might have arisen in the Mathura region between 150-50 B.C.

There are a number of poetical Avadanas which utilise the materials in the Avadana-sataka and other works. The following are some of them. *Kalpadrūmavadanamālā*, *Ratnavadanamālā*, *Asokavadanamālā*, *Dravimsatyavadana*, *Badrakalapavadana*, *Vratavadanamālā* (which is like a *Māṭaṃyā*) and *Sumagadhavadana*.

These works are available only in a few manuscripts. Others are known only through Tibetan and Chinese translations.

*Avadanakalpala'a*.—It consists of 107 legends written in an ornate poetic style by the famous Kashmirian poet Kshemendra in 1052 A.D. It is held in high esteem in Tibet. One more narrative and the introduction were added by Somendra, son of Kshemendra.

*Mahayanasutras*.—The Mahayana school consists of several sects and there is not a unified Canon for them. But in a number of Mahayana Sutras the Bodhisattva ideal is advocated rather than the Buddha stories. There is a collection of nine such Sutra texts called Nine Dharmas which were written at different periods and belonging to different sects. These are the following :—

*Aśvāśāzrīka-Prajñā-Purāṇa*, *Saddharama-Pundarīka*, *Lolita-Vistara*, *Lankavatara* (*Saddharama-Lankavatara*), *Suvarṇa-Prabhāsa*, *Gandavyūha*, *Tathagatavyūha*, *Samādhirāja* and *Dasabhumisvara*. These are called Vaipulya-Sutras and are held in great honour at the present day in Nepal.

*Saddharama-Pundarīka*.—Of the above this is the most important one, where Mahayana is treated exhaustively. The nucleus of this book goes back to the 1st century A.D. It is more uniform than the *Lolitavistara* or the *Mahāvastu*. It was translated into Chinese several times, earliest at about 223 A.D. Fragments of manuscripts of this written between 4th and 7th centuries were discovered in Central Asia. Between these manuscripts and the Nepalese text there is some difference.

However, in China and Japan this ranked foremost as a book of edification. Even today it may be found in every temple in Japan where for the Hokke-shū sect founded by Nichiren in 1262 A.D. it is the most sacred text. It is a principal text of the Tien-tai school of China and the Tendai sect of Japan. It has also inspired Buddhist art greatly.



*Avalokitesvara-Gunkaranda-Vyuha*.—Two versions, one in prose and another in verse of this are available. The metrical work glorifies Avalokitesvara and the concomitant theistic doctrine. The date of this work may be 4th century A.D. There is also a section in this devoted to the glorification of the knowledge of the six syllables "*Om Mani Padme Kum*".

*Sukhavati-Vyuhas*.—Here the Buddha Amitabha is glorified and his paradise described in two texts one longer and another shorter. A third work called *Amitayur-dhyana-sutra* which has come down in Chinese translation is devoted to the *dhyana* on Amit. For centuries these books have been the basis of the faith of the Buddhists of China and Japan. Belief in "Amida" and the hope of the Sukhavati (land of bliss) have been the favourite ideals of the Jodo-shu and Shin-shu sects of Japan.

*Akshobhya-Vyuha*.—It is in praise of the Buddha Akshobhya.

*Karuna-Pundarika*.—It is devoted to the glorification of Padmottara and his land Padma.

*Prajna-Paramita-Sutras*.—Apart from the theistic Mahayana-sutras there are a number of other Sutras which are philosophical in character. The most important group of Sutras of this class are the Prajna-Paramitas. They treat of all the six perfections but especially glorify the perfection of wisdom. The ancient dialogue form is adopted here. These texts probably were written in South India whence they spread to other regions. The various texts of these consisted of thousands of *Slokas*. A large number of such texts existed very early in India. In the Chinese Tripitaka these constitute the first large section. In the Tibetan Kanjur, these constitute the Ser-phyin section of 21 books. The great teachers of Nagarjuna, Asanga and Vasubandhu have written commentaries on these Paramitas which have come down only in Chinese Tripitaka and Tibetan Tanjur.

*Ashtasahasrika-Prajna-Paramita*.—This is probably the earliest. This says repeatedly that all phenomena are without being (*sunya*) and at the same time the Bodhisattva ideal is extolled.

*Vajracchedika-Prajna-Paramita*.—This is a very short book where the doctrine of *sunya* is dealt with in a condensed form.

*Avatamsaka-Sutras*.—These texts were the sacred books of the Avatamsaka school founded in China between 557-589 A.D. and of the Japanese Kegon sect. A large number of such books are found in the Tibetan Kanjur and the Chinese Tripitaka. No Sanskrit text of this class has come down.

*Gandavyuha-Mahayana-Sutra*.—It is akin to an Avatamsaka text in Chinese. Here the story of how a youth got enlightenment at the hands of Bodhisattva Manju-eri through





Bodhisattva Samantabhadra is narrated. It is frequently quoted in the *Sikshasamuccaya*. The last section of this entitled *Bhadracarī-Pranidhana-gāthā* is a fine specimen of books on Buddhist piety and has been used for worship in all the Mahayana countries since the 4th century A.D.

*Dasabhumika-Sutra or Dasabhumisvara-Sutra*.—Though the texts of these Sutras are said to form part of the Avatamsaka texts, these exist independently also. This is very important as it treats of the doctrine of "ten steps" the principal feature of Mahayana, the ten steps that a Bodhisattva should achieve.

*Ratnakuta*.—It is another collection of works of 49 Sutras and constitutes a large section both in the Tibetan and Chinese translations. There was perhaps a Sanskrit *Ratnakuta* also, but single independent works were also in existence.

*Kasyapa-Parivarta*.—It is said to form the section 43 of the *Ratnakuta* in Sanskrit. Fragments of manuscripts of this were found near Khotan. The subject matter relates to the Bodhisattva ideal and the doctrine of unreality (*sunyata*). It is an early work.

*Rashtrapala-Paripriccha or Sutra*.—It is one of the numerous *Paripricchas* included in the Chinese and Tibetan *Ratnakuta*. The date of this work is before the 6th century A.D. Here are two parts, the first devoted to the dogmas and the second to the Jatakas. The language and style of this are not commendable.

Other *Paripricchas* which are quoted in the *Sikshasamuccaya* are the following :—

*Ugra-Paripriccha, Udayana-Vatsaraja-Paripriccha, Upali-Paripriccha, Candrottara-Darika-Paripriccha* and others.

*Saddharama-Lankavatara-sutra or Lankavatara*.—This is devoted to the explanation of the doctrine of consciousness (*Vijnanavada*) just as the *Paramitas* are devoted to the doctrine of *Sunyata*. It is in prose except the last part which is in verse. It is a careless compilation. It was translated thrice into Chinese. It may be dated to the 4th century A.D. as the works of Maitreyanatha and Asanga are based on it.

*Samadhiraja* (King of Meditations).—It is one of the later Mahayana Sutras. It deals with various kinds of meditation. The *Sikshasamuccaya* quotes from this.

*Suvarna-Prabhasa*.—It is one of the very popular texts in all the Mahayana countries. Fragments of manuscripts of this were found in Central Asia. Though it is mentioned that it was taken to China in the first century A.D. the original should differ in many respects from the present text.

*Works of Nagarjuna*.—The great Madhyamika teacher hailed from Vidarbha and he is one of the founders of Mahayanism.



*Madhyamika-Karikas*.—It is in 400 verses grouped in 27 chapters. It presents in a systematic manner, the *Sunyavada*. He wrote himself a commentary called *Akutobhaya* on it which has come down only in Tibetan. The commentary on it called *Prasannapada* by Chandrakirti is the only one in Sanskrit. Here is taught the doctrine of two truths.

*Yuktichakṣhika* and *Sunyata-Saptati* of the same author also treat the same doctrine in a more concise form. Other works of his are as follows: *Pratitya-Samutpadahrdaya*, *Manayana-Vimsaka* (on philosophy), *Vigraha-vyavartani* (on logic), *Dharma-Samgraha* (glossary of technical terms) (of which the authorship is doubtful) and *Suhril-lekha*. It is a masterpiece of literature, but does not contain any Madhyamika doctrine.

Nagarjuna also wrote a number of commentaries on *Prajna-Paramita*, etc.

*Eka-Sloka-Sastra*.—It has come down only in Chinese. It deals with *Sevalhava* and *abhava*. *Prajna-danda* has come down in Tibetan. It deals with general morality. The authorship is doubtful.

Works of Aryadeva.—He is a pupil and follower of Nagarjuna. He lived about the second and third centuries A.D.

*Catuh-Sataka*.—It is a most famous work, and with Chandrakirti's commentary it is one of the basic works of the school.

*Dvadasa-Nikaya-Sastra*.—Along with Nagarjuna's *Madhyamika Sutras* and Aryadeva's *Catuh-Sataka*, this forms the ground-work of the faith of the Sanron sect of Japan.

*Cittavisuddhi-Prakarana*.—The authorship of this is doubtful but probably by another of the same name, of later times.

Two short treatises are known from the Chinese Tripitaka translated by Bodhiruci (508-535 A.D.) as written by him. They are a kind of commentary on some sections of the *Lankavatara*.

*Hastavala-Prakarana*.—It is another work which deals with the theory that all phenomena are mere illusion.

*Yogacara school of Mahayanism*.—Though the founder of this school was said to be Asanga or Aryasanga, in fact, he himself is said to have been instructed by another teacher. He was Maitreyanatha who lived about 200 A.D. According to the school the emphasis is laid on Yoga and its practice came to be systematically associated with Mahayanism.

Works of Maitreyanatha.—He was not a great poet but a philosopher well versed in poetical compositions.

*Prajna-Paramitopadesa-Sastra*.—It is usually found at the beginning of the manuscripts of the *Pancavimsatisahasrika-Prajna-Paramita*.



*Mahayana-Sutralamkara*.—It is also by him not by Asanga. *Yogacara-Bhumi-Sastra*. No complete text of this has come down. A portion of it called *Bodhisattva-Bhumi* has come down in Sanskrit.

Other works of this teacher have come down in Chinese.

Works of Asanga and Vasubandhu.—They were brothers who hailed from North-West India. Both probably belonged to *Sarvastivada* school. But Asanga became an exponent of *Yogacara* school of Mahayana earlier. Vasubandhu did the same later. Both belonged to about the 4th century A.D.

Vasubandhu's works.—He wrote several commentaries on the *Mahayana-Sutras* and some independent books also.

*Abhidharmakosa*.—It is in 600 verses (*Karikas*) and treats in a comprehensive manner, of the subjects such as ontology, psychology, cosmology, ethics and the doctrine of salvation. It is largely used as a text book in China and Japan.

*Gatha-Sangraha*.—It contains 24 sayings of Hinayana character. It is known only in Tibetan.

*Paramartha-Saptati*.—It is written against the Sankhya philosophy of Isvarakrishna. Its Sanskrit original is lost.

*Vimsatika and Trimsatika*.—They are the two classical treatises of his on *Vijnanamatravada*, which he wrote after becoming a Mahayanist.

Works by others.—*Mahayanasaddhotpata*.—Here is attempted a synthesis of Madhyamika and Vijnanavada doctrines. This work, though attributed to Asvaghosha, is really by another Asvaghosha of about the fifth century A.D. It is entirely unknown in Sanskrit and has come down only in Chinese. It is not quoted by any masters of Mahayana. As it is said that Hsuan-Tsang translated it from Chinese into Sanskrit, it may have been really a Chinese work. Now it is much studied in Japan.

Commentaries on the Mahayana texts by Nagarjuna and others, by Buddhapalita the founder of Prasangika school and Bhavaviveka the founder of Svatantra school have come down only in Tibetan translations.

*Dinnaga's works* :—He, along with Sthiramati and Dharmapala, belonged to the Vasubandhu school. All these flourished about the fifth century A.D. Dinnaga was the greatest and most independent thinker, the founder of Buddhist logic and one of the most important figures in Indian philosophy.



*Nyaya-pravesa*.—This is the only Sanskrit work of this teacher which has come down. Other works of his are known from Tibetan.

*Nyaya-bindu*.—It is the most important work of Dharmakirti, the successor of Dinnaga.

Sthiramati wrote a commentary on the *Kasyapa-parivarta* and on Vasubandhu's *Trimsatika*.

Dharmapala wrote a commentary on the *Vijnaptimatra-Siddhi*.

Chandrakirti (6th century) was the pupil of Dharmapala. He was at Nalanda and wrote numerous works on the Madhyamika philosophy. His chief work is *Madhyamikavatara* which is known from the Tibetan Tanjur. His commentary on Aryadeva's *Catusatika* is a work of very great literary merit.

Chandragomin an opponent of Chandrakirti was a writer of distinction. His poem *Sishyalekha-Dharma-Kavya* presents the doctrines. His drama *Lokananda* is known only from Tibetan.

Santideva was among the most famous later Mahayana teachers. He lived about the seventh century A.D. He is said to have written the *Sikshasamuccaya*, *Sutrasamuccaya* and *Bodhicaryavatara* in all of which the Bodhisattva ideal is explained.

Santaraksita (8th century) brother-in-law of Padmasambhava the founder of Lamaism in Tibet, wrote the *Tattvasangraha* which is a text of the Svatantra Yogacara school and the *Madhyamikalamkara Karikas*.

#### Stotras.

Like the *stotras* of Hinduism a number of *stotras* came to be written in prayer of the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, etc. Some of them are mentioned below.

*Catusvara* attributed to Nagarjuna, is available in Tibetan. *Suprabhatastotra* and *Ashtamaha-Sricaitya* are *stotras* by Harshavardhana. *Lokesvara-Sataka* is the work of the poet Vajradatta (ninth century) of the time of King Devapala. Here is a detailed description of Avalokitesvara in the elaborate *Sragdhara* metre. *Paramarthanamasangiti*, *Sapta-Buddha-Stotra*, *Naipaliya-Devata-Kalyana-Panca-Vimsatika* are by Amritananda.

*Stotras* to Tara are the following: *Sragdhara-Stotra* by Sarvajnamitra of Kashmir (eighth century). *Arya-Tara-Namashtottarasataka-Stotra* and *Ekavimsati-Stotra*.

*Bhakti-Sataka* is by Ramachandra Kavi Bharati, a Brahman of Bengal who came to Ceylon and worked under king Parakramabahu (about 1245 A.D.).

#### Mahatmyas.

*Sesayambhe-Purana* is really a Mahatmya, written about the 11th century A.D.





**Dharanis (protective spells).**

Works under this class form a large and important part of Mahayanist literature. In Ceylon some of the ancient Suttas were used as Parittas or Piritas. Indian Mahayanists transformed some of the Suttas into Mantras. Thus the *Prajna-Paramita-Suttas* were used as Dharanis. Dharanis have been known from ancient times. Buddha is said to have spoken against them. They belong to the period when Buddhism began to be absorbed into Hinduism. Their popularity in all the Buddhist countries is attested to by their wide use to this day. Some of them are given below.

*Prajna-Paramita-Uridaya-Sutra*.—It is said to present the negative side of the doctrine of *Prajna-Paramita-Suttas*. Ancient palm-leaf manuscripts of this are even today kept in the monastery of Horyuji, Japan, since 609 A.D.

*Ushnisha-Vijaya-Dharani*.—It contains a series of invocations. Palm-leaf manuscripts of this are also found in the above monastery.

*Amitayuh-Sutra*.—Though a *Sutra* it is a *Dharani* in substance. This is available in Sanskrit, old Khotanese and in the translations.

*Ratnolka-Dharani*.—It is quoted in the *Sikshasamuccaya*. It describes the Mahayana doctrine in detail.

*Megha-Sutra*.—It is a *Sutra* containing *Dharanis* also. It is intended for magic.

*Pancaraksha*.—It belongs to the class of independent *Dharanis*. This consists of five *Dharanis*. It is extremely popular in Nepal.

*Maha-Mayuri* or *Vidyarajni*.—It is one of the five of the above collection. Its origin may be traced to the Mora-Jataka. It has two forms, larger and shorter which have been repeatedly translated into Chinese.

**Tantras.**

When Mahayanism grew it included features of *Vamachara* schools of Hinduism. Mantrayana and Vajrayana developed as a result. Mantrayana naturally laid stress on the efficacy of words and syllables as possessing mysterious powers in attaining salvation. Vajrayana advocated the doctrine that salvation can be achieved not merely by means of *mantras*, but by devotion to all that is meant by the word *vajra*. For instance *vajra* is taken to mean *Sunya* as well as *Vijnana*. In the wake of this new development a literature also grew up in imitation of the literature of the Saktas. The works are called the Tantras which are grouped into four classes, viz., *Kriya*, *Charya*, *Yoga* and *Anuttara-yoga*.

*Adikarma-Pradipa*.—It is almost like a *Grihya-Sutra* in form and contents. It describes the various religious acts that a Mahayanist should perform. It is an example of *Kriya-Tantra*.

*Ashtamivata-Vidhana*.—It is another book of the above class.



### Sadhanas.

The Tantra literature contains a number of *Sadhanas* or works of magic ritual by using which a person attains to *Siddhi*. As the *Sadhaka* has to meditate intensely on his deity, it has to be described minutely. According to the nature and purposes the aspects of the deities have to be described. Thus the *Sadhanas* became the source for the sculptors and artists to draw from for making their images. It is because of this, the *Sadhanamalas* are so important. The long *Para Sadhana* is an example of work where compassion is also inculcated. The *Sadhanamala* has 312 *Sadhanas* in defective Sanskrit written about 7th-8th centuries. Asanga is said to have written a *Sadhana*. A Nagarjuna of the 7th century wrote *Sadhanas* and *Tantras*. Indrabhuti (687-71 A.D.) was a great Tantra teacher who wrote the *Jñānasiddhi*. He was the king of Uddiyana and father of Padma-sambhava, the founder of Lamaism. Padmavajra a contemporary of above king wrote the *Guhyasiddhi* which is available in Sanskrit. Here all the secret rites of the Vajrayana are described.

Lakṣminkara, the sister of Indrabhuti, wrote the *Adityasiddhi* in which novel monistic doctrines called *Sahajayana* are explained. She refutes rituals and recommends meditation on the body where the gods dwell.

Sahajayogini Cinta (c. 761 A.D.) is also a Tantra-authoress.

The *Tathagata-Guhya-Sutra* or *Guhya-Samaja* is an early *Tantra*.

*Panackarma* is said to be an extract from the above. It deals with *yoga* and less with Tantric usages. Sakyamitra, contemporary of Devapala of Bengal (850 A.D.) is said to be the author of the third section of this, the remaining four sections being attributed to the Nagarjuna of the 7th century.

*Manju-Sri-Mula-Kalpa*.—It is said to belong to the *Sutras*, but it is a *Tantra*.

(*Ekallavira*)-*Canda-Maharoshana*.—This *Tantra* deals with the philosophy and with the Yogin's such as Mohavajri, etc., and with female deities with sexual actions.

*Sricakrasambhara-Tantra* describes the ritual of the great bliss (*Mahasukha*) and it has come down only in Tibetan. Taranatha, in his history of Indian Buddhism, mentions that Tantric practices were in vogue in Bengal between the 9th and 11th centuries. *Yoga* and magic were then paramount in Buddhism. That the *Tantras* of Buddhism were strongly influenced by Saivite *Tantras* is evident from the works called *Mahakala-Tantra* where the name *Mahakala* is that of Siva and *Samvarodaya-Tantra* in which the *Linga* cult and the worshipping of Saivite gods are expressly recommended.

The Tantric form of the faith was popularised in China in 720 by Vajrabodhi and Amoghavarjya.



In Japan Mantrayana not Vajrayana, became popular. The Shin-go sect has the Tantras as their sacred texts. In the later Tantras, Chinese and Japanese influences are seen. Among the later Tantras is the *Tara-rakasya* by Brahmananda.

For the history of Buddhist literature a study of the Tantras is necessary because Tantras were popular in all the Buddhist countries.

#### Buddhist works by Tamilian authors.

*Manimekalai*.—Manimekalai has the distinction of being not only one of the five famous *kavyas* in Tamil literature but also the earliest in it. Among the five famous Tamil works, the *Jivakachintamani* and the *Silappadikaram* were Jain works while Manimekalai and *Kundalakesi* are the only known Buddhist works. *Kundalakesi* has been lost to us but Manimekalai remains our chief source of information on Buddhism.

Sittalai Sattanar, the author of Manimekalai, glorifies Buddhism at the expense of Jainism in this immortal epic poem. The story of the conversion of Manimekalai, daughter of Kovalan and Madhavi and her activities as a bhikshuni are treated at great length in this book in thirty cantos.

The work has been tentatively assigned to the second century A.D. though some scholars think that it must have been written somewhere in the eighth century A.D. Manimekalai is an excellent work in Tamil literature not only because it is almost the only literary work on South Indian Buddhism, but also due to the fact that the work provides ample evidence for the contemporary social, cultural and historical background of the country during that particular period.

*Virasoliyam*.—Virasoliyam or Virasoliya Karigai as it is called was composed during the time of the famous Chola monarch, Virarajendra. Buddhahamitra, the author of this famous grammatical work was patronised by Virarajendra and under his patronage wrote this grammatical work in the eleventh century A.D.

Virasoliyam, and the commentary on Virasoliyam written by Perundevanar are indispensable, for a study of the history of Tamilnad and especially the Chola country. There are also some beautiful verses on the Buddha in this work.

It is said that this Tamil work on grammar was very useful to the Buddhist of Ceylon when they learnt the Tamil language. A Sinhalese work on grammar the "*Sidada Sankara*" is based on Virasoliyam. Evidently it was very popular with the Ceylonese Buddhists.

*Kundalakesi*.—Kundalakesi, another famous Buddhist work is lost to posterity. This book treats at considerable length the story of a Vaisya girl by name Kundalakesi and her love for a daring robber who was condemned to death and her ultimate salvation.



through the Buddha. The period during which this *kavya* was written is still a matter for speculation. It has been attributed to Nadagutta who lived in the fourth century A.D. Some scholars assign the work to eighth century. Only quotations from this great *kavya* are available to us. This work is, again, one which glorifies Buddhism. Kundalakesi, the heroine of the work, is said to have entered the fold of Jainism, learnt the Jaina religious canons and became a famous Jain scholar. Ultimately she was vanquished in a theological discussion by Sariputta, the chief disciple of the Buddha and attained salvation through the Buddha.

Verses from this work are preserved in the *Purattirattu*.

*Siddhantatoyai*.—It is one of the works lost to us but for some references. It may be said that this book was probably an exposition of the tenets of Buddhism. The author of this book is unknown and the date of its composition uncertain. In a Saiva work by Jnanaprasada there is a reference to this work where a few verses from it are given.

*Tiruppadiyam*.—We are still in the dark regarding the date and the author of this work which is lost to us. The name however shows that it may have been an invocatory work on the Buddha. References to this work, however, are to be found in a Saiva work *Sivajñana Siddhiar* and the commentary on Nilakesi.

*Vimbasarakathai*.—A reference to this book is found in the commentary on the Jaina work Nilakesi. Regarding the date and the author of this work, we have little or no information. As is evident from the title, we may say that it was the story of Vimbasara or Bimbisara, the king of Rajagriha. Bimbisara met the Buddha and was converted to Buddhism and he gifted the "Venuvana" to the Buddha. The story goes that Devadatta, a cousin of the Buddha, was jealous of him, caused many sufferings to the Buddha in conjunction with Ajatasatru, son of Bimbisara. The Buddha, however, triumphed over Devadatta. Ajatasatru on the other hand, coveting the throne, imprisoned his father and tortured him to death, but later repented for his cruelty.

The *Vimbasarakathai* also records the Buddha's birth in the Lumbinivana. We have only four lines from this *kavya* which are more or less of the same style as the verses in the *Manimekalai*.

For other works see chapter on Buddhism in Tamilnad.





## DECLINE OF BUDDHISM IN INDIA.

By Dr. A. Aiyappan.

An Amaravati frieze on a coping slab (*ushnisha*) illustrating the theme of the division of the relics of the Buddha, has exercised the greatest fascination on me for over two decades, now. It reminds me of the passing away in 1948 of the other great Indian belonging to the same category as the Buddha. The Andhra artists at work on this composition were at their very best in sculpturing the details of the solemn, final incident in the mortal life of the Tathagata.

The story of the Master's death and the division of his bones is given in the *Mahā-parinibbana sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* (ii, p. 179 /191) and is briefly this:—

Learning through Ananda that the Master had passed away, the Mallas of Kusinara greatly lamented and came to the Sal grove with music and dance and with garlands and perfumes for performing his cremation ceremony. The ceremonies lasted a week when finally the Buddha's corpse was carried to be placed on the funeral pyre. Mahākassapa arrived in the meantime and revered the feet of the Master. After the body was burnt, the Mallas of Kusinara surrounded the bones of the Buddha in their council hall with a lattice work of spears and with a rampart of bows, and for seven days they honoured them with music and dance, garlands and perfume.

Soon the news reached Ajātasattu, King of Magadha, the Licchavis of Vesali, the Sakyas of Kapilavastu, the Bhis of Allakappa, Koliyas of Ramagrama, the Mallas of Pava, and the Brahmins of Vethadipa, all of whom sent their messengers to request a share of the bones of the Buddha. The Mallas of Kusinara, however, refused to give them up as the Buddha died in their country and they felt that they were entitled to the entire remains of the Master. But a Brahmin named Drona advised them not to quarrel over the remains of the Master who had always preached peace and goodwill. The Mallas now requested Drona himself to divide the relics which he accordingly did. He divided them into eight parts and gave the portions away taking the receptacle for himself over which he built a stupa. The Moriyas of Pippalivana asked for a share of the remains too late and had to content themselves with the embers. A stupa was raised over these as well as over each of the eight portions of the actual relics.

In the frieze the lower scene to the right represents the funeral ceremonies and honouring of the Buddha's remains with dance, music and songs. The first panel above this to



the right shows the Mallas disagreeing to give the remains of the Buddha to the applicants, and seated with his head in an attitude of persuasion is a noble-looking man who is obviously Drona.

In the next panel all the applicants are assembled along with the Mallas who have, with the help of Drona, made the eight divisions shown in two rows of four on a rectangular table around which they are seated. Finally in the scene to the left seven elephants issue from the gateway of Kusinara, each with a rider holding a relic casket and a *cauri*-bearer honouring it by waving the *cauri* since "as men treat the remains of a King of Kings so should they treat the remains of a Tathagata" (*Digha Nikaya*).

Of the characters in the story given above, Ajatasatru, the parricide to whom the Buddha gave peace in his remorse over his sons, was a blue-blooded Kshatriya; the Brahman Drona was a wise peace-maker whom the quarrelling warrior tribes respected as a leader. Had the Buddha been regarded as a person opposed to the whole of the Vedic faith, it is most unreasonable to expect all the anxiety exhibited here by the Brahmans and Kshatriyas for a share of the relics of the Master. Making due allowance for partisan and literary exaggeration, no one would entertain any doubt about the core of truth in the above story of the incidents connected with the division of the relics. We might conclude that at the time of its founder, Buddhism was not anti-Brahmanical, but was accepted by Hindus just as in recent years we accepted the Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj.

Over two centuries later, at the time of Asoka, we find the great Emperor using the words Brahmanas coupled with Sramanas, with the same high significance for both, almost in the same manner as in the Dhammapada. In the Shahazgarhi edict, the Emperor laments over the pain he caused to the Brahmanas and other good people of Kalinga. This concern for Brahmanas shown by Asoka, who had by this time become a Buddhist Upasaka, shows that there was no question during Mauryan times of any opposition between Hinduism and Buddhism. Pushyamitra Sunga's massacre of the Buddhist monks of Kakanada Vihara (Sanchi) looks more like a political vendetta than anti-Buddhist Brahmin fanaticism. Moreover, Pushyamitra, the general, was only nominally a Brahmin. His successor Agnimitra repaired and enlarged the stupas, chaityas and viharas and thereby made restitution for the harm inflicted on the Buddhist Sangha by Pushyamitra. From Mauryan times onwards, Buddhism and Hinduism (chastened by the healthy rivalry and criticism of the Buddha and his worthy disciples, the leaders among whom were also mostly Brahmanas) were both developing side by side in parallel directions but the patronage and support of Asoka and Kanishka gave Buddhism some advantage over Brahmanism. But despite this handicap Hindu culture, Sanskrit literature and Hindu art and philosophy underwent a renaissance of lasting potentialities during the Gupta period. It would seem that



Hindusim on the defensive had more vitality than complacent, unattacked Hinduism. The Guptas and the Vakatakas though followers of the Vedic faith do not seem to have been animated by any overt opposition to Buddhism.

That Buddhism did not arise in opposition to Hinduism but only as a complement to it is made very explicit in some of the statements of the Buddha. In the Samyutta Nikaya, the Buddha gave the parable of the traveller discovering an ancient city with beautiful palaces, gardens and lakes, etc., and of this lone traveller making the city habitable once again. The ancient path is obviously the uncontaminated Indian way and the ancient city is purified Hinduism without its overgrown emphasis on mechanical ritualism. Modern scholarship has shown that the Buddha did not deny the doctrine of the immanence of the Absolute though he questioned the correctness of the belief in the ultimate authority of the revealed word. Buddhist symbolism, in fact, explains what the Buddha is said to have left unsaid about problems of the Absolute. The Bodhi tree, mythologically the tree under which the Buddha got his enlightenment, symbolically the Buddha, is in philosophical mysticism to Ekasvattha of the Upanishads, the seers of the symbol Absolute. The Dharmachakra representing the sun, and the authority of the ruler of the world (Chakravartin) is the same as the discus of Vishnu. Before he came to be represented in anthropomorphic form, the Buddha used to be represented by the "Flaming Pillar", which is very much like a Linga from which flames emerge. Agni, as a high god, is an essentially Vedic concept, though it is found as a symbol of Jehovah in Semitic mythology. We might say that the Buddhists adopted and adapted it for their purpose.

In the later Mahayanic Buddhism and devotional Hinduism the parallel development of the divine personalities of the vast pantheon is too obvious to need elaborate explanation. The supreme benevolence of the Bodhisattvas is equated with similar qualities of Vishnu or Siva; similarly also the Taras and Devis. Sridevi of the Hindu pantheon is the Sirima Yakshini of the early Buddhists and Ganesa is likewise, a developed form of the elephant-eared Yaksha of the popular Buddhist pantheon. The Dikpalas of the Hindu shrines stand guard in the same way as the Lokapalas in Buddhist shrines. In all these developments which went on over several centuries, the question who borrowed from whom is a matter of chronology, as both the parties drew upon a common fund of traditional ideas and symbols belonging to a common cultural heritage. In the later developments of Mahayana Buddhism (including Zen Buddhism) and of Puranic Hinduism, the distinction between the two was a distinction without any significant difference in basic concepts. The Buddha in Mahayana came to be identified with the Absolute and Bodhisattvas came to be regarded as emanations of the Buddha.

The Upanishads and Buddhism were at one in placing *Para-vidya*, knowledge of the Atman, as the only Reality, above the study of the Vedas and Vedangas. The Mundaka (i, ii, vii) openly brands as fools those who perform mere rites and ceremonies. See also



Bṛihadaranyaka (i, vi, x) which compares those who offer sacrifices to the gods without knowing the Atman to domestic animals ministering to the comforts of their owners. While the Upanishads departed from the popular magical faith under the cover of the authority esoterically implied in the Vedas, the Buddha did it in a more open and daring fashion.

The "Ancient Way" to which the Buddha and also the Upanishads referred is partially implied in an esoteric sense in the Vedic sacrifice which is an act of internal reintegration being actually conceived in our hearts. The reconciliation of conflicting power effected by the sacrifice (*yajna*) takes place not outside but within the sacrificer. The Vajra (thunderbolt) with which Indra slays the Dragon is Light Progenitive and is, therefore, phallic. If every act is to be a sacrifice and such sacrifices should be an incessant operation, the sacrifices which priests perform vicariously for others are just like the shadow for the substance. The Buddha therefore had to point out other ways than the difficult, mystic way involved in the Vedic *yajna*. He said in the Samuyutta Nikaya (I, 169) that the true Agnihotra is within :

I pile no wood for fires on altars ;

I kindle a flame within me ;

My heart the hearth, the flame the departed self.

The Aitareya Aranyaka says the same thing in identical terms.

What were the Buddhist's points of departure which in spite of their common sources made Buddhism different, to begin with, from Hinduism ? I have already referred to the Buddha's denial of the authority of the written word. He gave primacy to experience over texts and authorities and laid emphasis on disciplined practical life than on the theory of religion. He wanted people first to purify their hearts of lust and passion ; after purifying themselves to destroy *Avidya* (ignorance) that burns within them ; and then to understand and realise that desire is the root of all suffering and therefore eschew desire. He himself was the great wayfarer. His refusal to disclose and discuss esoteric philosophy and his condemnation of speculative and verbose argumentation have been misunderstood and described as atheism and agnosticism. Another innovation which the Buddha introduced was analytical thinking in the field of religion in the place of magical rites and emotionalism. A religion like the Buddha's, trying to base life on reason, asceticism and broad humanism, is difficult to popularise, but in the early phases of Buddhism, the dynamic personality of the Buddha provided it with great popular appeal. This initial personal momentum sustained Buddhism for about two centuries, but the Buddha who had sought to supplant emotion and blind faith by reason, himself became a victim of religious emotion—the Buddha defied. With the hope of securing good life in heaven men and women built





stupas and images of the Buddha. Stories containing a great deal of imaginative and fantastic details were compiled for the delectation of the populace. Buddhism attained great popularity in India when the cult of the stupa and the Paramita cult had the widest prevalence. The essence of the original Buddhism can be deemed as submerged and lost when Buddha worship began.

The founder of Buddhism expected everyone of his followers to be a light unto himself. He made it very clear that salvation depended on individual effort and that no one else could save any individual. Entering the Buddhist Order was just a preparation for the life of the spirit. The Mahayanists watered down the hardships of the spiritual endeavour and made it in practice just a token, and instead of being lights unto themselves began to lean heavily on spiritual beings who would mercifully answer their supplications and prayers.

Some of the greatest innovations which the Buddha made were at the organisational level. We are not aware of any organised efforts made by pre-Buddhist Hindus to convert others to their religion. Ceremonies connected with the admission of Vratyas into the fold are mentioned but they do not imply missionary work. The Buddha, however, said to his monks; "Go ye forth, for the welfare and comfort of the world." The yearly account of the numbers of people converted into Buddhism by the various leading Theras remind one of the reports of Christian missionaries to their home boards in Europe or England. Dharmarakshita, a Greek monk, is said to have converted 37,000 people in Aparanta (the West). The mission led by Asoka's son and daughter which went to Ceylon need not be a fiction at all. Asoka has recorded that he sent Dharma-Dutas to various countries to "elevate the people" by a growth in piety." Propagation of religion as a function of the State was a new thing which, though it did not survive in the Asokan way in the India of later days, yet remained the ideal of Hindu kings as upholders of the Hindu Dharma.

From the time of Asoka, the Buddhists got accustomed to lean on royal patronage, but it is doubtful if ever they were able to monopolise such royal patronage for themselves to the exclusion of other faiths. The greatest patrons of Buddhism, Asoka and Kanishka, were too wise to show partisanship to Buddhism and estrange the Hindu subjects. Asoka's son and successor is believed to have been a Jaina. The Satavahanas who patronised Buddhism were greater patrons of Brahmanism. The Guptas, under whom the Bhagavata cult developed supported Buddhism but only partially perhaps for political reasons. The impression one gets of Buddhism between the third century B.C. and the fourth century A.D. is one of rapid growth, and of even more rapid decline from the time of the great Hindu renaissance under the Guptas. There was nothing in Mahayana Buddhism that was not there in the Vaishnavism that flowered and bore fruit during the Gupta period.



The impetus given by the personality of the Buddha was spent up in the course of 8 or 9 centuries and when he became a god amidst many gods, there was little to maintain Buddhism as a distinctive faith alongside of Vaishnavism with its greater emotional appeal. The literary revival of the Gupta period which saw the final recensions of the Mahabharata and Ramayana and the poetry and drama of Kalidasa, was more impressive than anything that the Buddhists had to show. In the field of art the artists of Mathura sculptured the images of Vishnu with the same form and feeling as they did those of the Buddha. The Bodhisattva of Ajanta was painted by Buddhist artists with his Sakti in female form by his side just as the Hindus conceived of Vishnu with Sridevi by his side. The process of unconscious Hinduisation of Buddhism was thus begun by the Indian Buddhists themselves. If the history of art gives us any clue of the transformation of Buddhism, we might say that the stream of Buddhism which originated from the static Hindu reservoir of Magadha flowed back again into its source.

As Hinduism was non-proselytising, it has no need for a body of unalterable doctrines, and so it was easy for it to absorb several of the good points of Buddhism. Hindu philosophy therefore appropriated for itself the Advaita philosophy of the Buddhists, adopted the practice of Ahimsa and gave up animal sacrifices, and began to organise Mutts on the models of the Buddhist monasteries. The culminating act in this process of absorption was the conversion of the Buddha into an Avatar of Vishnu. The great regard with which Sankara looked upon the Buddha is evidenced in the Acharya's *stoka* saluting the Buddha in his Dasavatarnastotra as the greatest of Yogis. It is indeed refreshing to note that even in the heat of philosophical controversies, no Hindu of any standing was guilty of disrespect to the Buddha.

Buddhism in its last phase in India, which we might call the Nalanda phase, became more priest-ridden than Brahmanism at its worst. It was an evil day for Mahayanism when the Buddhist holy man Asanga brought the Hindu gods to aid men not only towards salvation but also in the attainment of worldly desires. The Hindu gods infiltrated into Buddhism in the guise of personifications of the various powers of the Buddha. Asanga also introduced Tantrism which grew very strong in Bengal till the time of the Muslim invasion.

Talking of the great monastic university of Nalanda, one is reminded of the fact that the campus of the university and the monasteries was surrounded by great walls and had fortified entrances. These defences became necessary, partly because of the great insecurity of life and property, consequent on the White Hun invasions and partly because the monasteries had become centres of economic and also political influence and power. The concentration of wealth and influence in monasteries was a development which the Buddha would not have expected when he started the organisation of monastic establishments.



Though pre-Buddhistic India knew of Parivrajakas and of small groups of ascetics living in seclusion, the organisation of monks into Sanghas with detailed regulations for the conduct of life and administration within the organisation seems to be an innovation introduced by the Buddha. While the large number of dedicated men and women living in organised establishments gave Buddhism a tremendous strength for popularising the religion and for the leisured cultivation of literature, art, architecture, science, medicine, logic, philosophy, etc., the monasteries turned out to be the Achilles' heel of Buddhism during the last lap of its existence in India. Instead of spreading out and scattering its influence over the country, Buddhism got concentrated in a few monastic establishments, and during the Hun and the Muslim invasions, these proved to be the most vulnerable and inviting targets for the invaders. The monasteries of Gandhara and North-Western India went down like houses of cards during the first phase of the Hun attacks; a similar fate overtook other monasteries in the Gangetic valley. A few that survived after the Hun invasions were robbed and destroyed by the Muslim invaders. Saivite attacks on Buddhism are also known to history. The fanatical Saiva king Sasanka of Bengal almost destroyed the Bodhi tree at Gaya. At other strongholds of Saivism in Western and Southern India, fanatical Saivites seem to have followed the bad example set by King Sasanka of Bengal. While Brahmanism had sufficient vitality and resilience to withstand and survive the onslaught of Islam, Buddhism could not resurrect itself because its root in the soil had already been destroyed. It will be of considerable historical interest if we are able to get more particulars about the conversion of the Buddhist temples such as the Chaitya of Chazaria into Siva temples, and details of the transfer of properties belonging to Buddhist monasteries to Saiva Mutts.

I would now summarise my general impressions :

(1) It is unlikely, from the point of view of numbers and popularity, that Buddhism was at any time more important in India than Hinduism, though at certain epochs it might have had greater influence upon a particular ruler or a group of people. It seems to have been more urban than rural.

(2) Its doctrinal difference from pre-Buddhist Hinduism was slight, but it was innovative in several matters concerning the application of the ancient ideas to the affairs of human life. *Yajna* was to be a sacrifice of the phenomenal self and not of *paras*.

(3) The post-Upanishadic development of Hinduism and of Mahayanistic Buddhism followed almost parallel courses with the Vasudeva cult as the core of the one and the Buddha cult as that of the other.

(4) The hard path of the Tathagata was too difficult a way to attract popular enthusiasm and having stimulated a revaluation of the old values and having added a few new ones of its own, the original Buddhism fulfilled itself by about the second century B.C.



(5) The great Buddhist thinkers in their viharas developed all arts and sciences which helped and stimulated Hinduism in the nearby camps.

(6) Buddhism transplanted into the countries of the Far East, South-East Asia and Central Asia contained new values and strange novelties for the peoples of those areas. This novelty factor was lacking in India to aid its continuance here as a distinct socially organised entity.

(7) In the earlier phases, Hindus welcomed the Buddha and his way. In the early centuries after Christ, it was tolerated. And opposition to it began with the militant Saivite revival, after the Hindus had accepted and assimilated a great deal of the values and thoughts of the Buddhists.

(8) The decline of Buddhism was initiated when the Bhagavata cult developed, and proved more attractive to the populace; when Mihirakula's hordes descended on India; and the final blow came from the Mussalman invaders and from Saivite organisations.

(9) The personality of the Buddha continued to be venerated in India and the values he gave India were always entrenched at the back of the Hindu mind. Buddha became thus internalised in the Hindu psyche.





### A NOTE ON OTHER BUDDHIST VESTIGES IN TAMIL-NAD.

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In the articles appearing elsewhere in this book, mention has been made of a number of places of Buddhist interest. Here it is proposed to refer to a few more Buddhist places and teachers of Tamil-nad.

#### Places.

Mylapore seems to have been a place of importance for the Buddhists in the early centuries of the Christian era. The word Mylapore derives from the Tamil name—*Mayil-arppil* (*Mayil-arppu-il* "place where the peacock cries in joy"). This name *Mayilarppil* or *Mayilarppu* is found in the oldest inscriptions referring to the place and in early literature (*Devaram* and the *Nalayira Prabandam*). The Prakrit *Mayurasattapattana*, derived from the Sanskritised name *Mayura-sabda-pattana*, is found mentioned in a few places in the *Visuddhimagga* (or the "Way of Purity") of the famous Buddhaghosa. From the statement—

*Ayacito sumatina therena bhaddanta Buddhamittena pubbe Mayurasuttapattanamahi saddhim vasantena ;*

*Ayacito sumatina therena bhaddanta Jotipalena Kancipura disu maya pubbe saddhim vasantena ;*

in the *Visuddhimagga* (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Edition—*preface*, pp. xvii and xviii) it will be clear that the great author of commentaries sojourned in Mylapore and that his contemporaries were Buddhamitra and Jotipala.

The colophon of the *Visuddhimagga* (B.V.B. Edition, p.506) says that he was a native of Morandakhetaka\* and lived in *Mayurasatta-pattana* or *Mayurarupa-pattana* for some time. That a probable reference to him is met with in the *Dīṇyānucaritam* may be seen from the following verse :

*Tatahprahrishatak caranetaram-budhes tapodhanam pascimatirasimani*

*Mayuranamo nagarasya mandanam tamapaham kairava tirthamagatah*

(Canto III, sloka 13.)

It is worthwhile reproducing here in full the observations made on the birth-place of Buddhaghosa by H. Clarke Warren and D. D. Kosambi in their edition of the *Visuddhimagga* (Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. 41-1950-, *preface*, p.xv).

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\* That this place is to be located in the Telugu country near Nagarjunakonda and hence this Buddhist author was a native of that place is the gist of the article in J.O. R. XIV, pp. 278-284.



"His birth-place was the village of Morandaketaka (peacock-egg village) as is very clear from the colophon of this book where he is called Morandaketaka-vallabhena or Morandaketaka-Buddhaghosa".

"The method of nomenclature is still found in Dravidian India and Ceylon. His surname vanished when his fame had made him Buddhaghosa. It is to be noticed that the usually clear scribe of Buddhaghosa changes the word Morandaketaka to Mudantakhedaka (gladness ending in sorrow): the Sinhalese *Manuscripts* read Cetaka for Khetaka a possible confusion of letters. Khetaka is Sanskrit for village and remains in modern South Indian vernaculars as Kheda. He lived for some time at Mayurasutta pattana or Mayurarupa pattana as he says in the colophon of M. Atth: 'I am writing (this Atthakatha) at the request of the venerable Buddhamitta who lived with me at Mayura-sutta-pattana (or Mayurarupa pattana)'. I cannot locate this, nor his birth-place, but an archaeologist familiar with the Telugu country should be able to identify it; where at least a monastery existed."

One need not look for this in the Telugu country. It is only 16 miles south-west of Kanchi and is at present called Moranam situated in the North Arcot district.

Thus it will be clear that a Buddhist monastery or *arama* existed in Mylapore where the Buddhist masters stayed.

Podimangai (Bodhimangalam) is mentioned in the *Periyapuranam* of Sekkilar as a *Sakkiyar tam Podimangai* where the Saiva saint Tirujnanaśambanda worsted his Sakya or Buddhist opponents, namely, Buddha Nandi and Suriputra\* who were *theras*. This village is to be identified with the modern hamlet of that name of the village of Tiruvidaikkali (southwest of Tranquebar). In the neighbouring hamlet of Perunjeri Buddhist images are found. †

Rajendrapattanam is a village in the Vriddhachalam taluk in South Arcot district. Here on some of the pillars of the Siva temple are engraved an inscription in archaic characters of about the 7th century A.D. This mentions Sri Mahendra, etc., and refers to a Sariputta being the disciple of Buddhavarman, Sri Santamati and so forth. ‡ In view of the fact that the inscription is probably of the 7th century A.D. as suggested by the name "Mahendra" shall we take the Buddhist monk named Sariputta of the inscription to be the same as the one who met the Saiva saint Sambandar in controversy at Podimangai?

Chidambaram was also a place where Buddhists lived. There is enough internal evidence in the works of the great Saiva saint Manikkavachakar to show that he had a hard fight with the Buddhists here, finally emerging victorious. It is, however, regrettable that not a single specimen of Buddhist sculpture or other vestiges of Buddhism have been reported from here.

\* *Periyapuranam*—Tirujnanaśambandar—Verses 904-925.

† Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy for 1923, No. 216.

‡ *Ibid.*, for 1940-41, Nos. 139-41.



At Tanjore are some bas-relief sculptures depicting scenes (Fig. 40) from the life of the Buddha fitted into the balustrade of the southern flight of steps leading to the *antarala* of the Brihadisvara *vimana*. This is a significant evidence to show the regard in which the great Chola monarch, Rajaraja I, held Buddhism. His tolerance, nay his patronage, of Buddhism is too well-known by his endowments to the *palli* at Nagapattinam. The sculptures show chiefly the attack of Mara on the Bodhisattva and the attaining of enlightenment by the latter. The treatment of the subjects is pleasing as it is original and is in the true classical style.

### Inscription.

An interesting Buddhist copper-plate grant of Sundarachola's time consisting of six copper-plates came to notice recently. They come from a place very near Vedaranyam on the east coast of Tanjore district. This fact coupled with references to some places near Vedaranyam met with in the inscription, suggest that in all probability the original grant should have been in possession of a person belonging to a place near Vedaranyam and Kodikkarai (Point Calimere).

These six plates that are extant are the 13th, 15th, 18th, 19th, 21st and 23rd of the grant as could be seen from the serial numbers engraved on the first side of each of the plates just above the hole for the ring; the original complete set should have contained twenty-three or more plates. The fate of the other plates and the ring and the seal is unknown.

The inscription is in the Tamil script of the 10th century A.D. and in Tamil language. The exact date should have been mentioned in one of the first few plates that are missing. But that the inscription is of the 10th century A.D. is known from the fact that the subject of the inscription was the grant of land to a Buddhist institution called *Sundaracholapperumpalli*, the institution having been constructed by one Selettiyan. This Sundarachola is obviously the father of Rajaraja the Great.

In the 13th plate, there is the interesting information, namely, that the tax-free land was given as *Palliccandam* for the women students (*man* மன = *manakichehi*) of the *palli*. The 23rd plate has another interesting information that the 30-veli Village of Danamalippundi was granted in favour of Sandanandi Mauni Dovar of the Nandisangam (Nandisangha) and that one-quarter of the grant was intended for *Pennadigalmar*, obviously the nuns, and the remaining three-quarters for the *Andigalmar* obviously the monks belonging to the Sundaracholapperumpalli mentioned in the 15th plate. It is also learnt that the term *palliccandam* denoted endowments to Buddhist shrines and monasteries as it did to Jaina institutions. In fact, the term *palli* came to denote all religious institutions (Buddhist, Jaina, Moslems and Christian) other than those of the Hindus.



In the 21st plate there are mentioned the two temples, the Sakkiyappalli and the Sakkiyappalliappadari temple, both in the village of Kulalur. Obviously the former was a temple dedicated to the Buddha who was of the Sakya clan and the latter temple may have been a temple of Tara or Hariti.

The record was attested to by the following men of the locality including members of the assembly and merchant guilds whose names are interesting as they are obviously Buddhist names in most cases.

Urankorvan, Sattan-Madevan, Sattampattasali (Sattan Bhattasali), Nagananduvan, Taliyan, Nakkan-revan, Amalan-Mundan, Nakkanadiyan and Kadan-sattan.

The other interesting fact that is derived from this inscription relates to the names of a number of villages. They are the following :—

(a) Umala-, Umbala-, or Umba-nadu. It comprised the modern Tirutturaippundi taluk of the Tanjore district (c.f. A.R.E. 415 of 1904, where a gift to the temple at Vedaran-yam in Kunnur-nadu, a subdivision of Umbala-nadu is mentioned). The modern Umbala-cheri in the Tirutturaippundi taluk, Tanjore district, probably gave the ancient name Umbala-nadu to that area.

(b) Irumudiccholapuram.—Irumudi-c-cholan was perhaps the surname of Parantaka I. (c.f. A.R.E. 195 of 1907 from Tiruvidaimarudur mentioning the 38th year of Irumudic-chola Pallavarayar, a chieftain under Madurai-konda Parakesari or Parantaka I). This Irumudi-c-cholapuram was a mercantile town on the coast.

(c) Kunnur of Umalanadu.

(d) Ilakattur of Umalanadu.

(e) Tittaicheri of the same nadu. This is the same as the modern village of Tittai-cheri in the road from Nannilam to Nagapattinam in Nannilam taluk, Tanjore district.

(f) Kudapulam of the same nadu.

(g) Perumbala Marudur of the same nadu.

(h) Takattur, now in Tirutturaippundi taluk of Tanjore district.

(i) Kiliyur.

(j) Purankarambainadu.

(k) Danamalippundi of the above nadu.

(l) Vandalai Velur (Kurram). (c.f. A.R.E. No. 112 of 1902 from Tiruvorriyur where Sirramur is said to be in Vandalai Velur Kurram in Rajendrachola valanadu in Chola-mandalam.) Maraikkadan the araiyan of Kunnur in Umalanadu is mentioned as the writer of the record in the 13th plate.





In the 23rd plate two men called Vela Narayanan and another the son of Brahmapriyan the *madhyastha* (arbitrator) are said to have written the grant under the orders of the *Perunguri* of Perumbalamarudur belonging to Purankarambai-nadu.

The gift was a royal grant as could be seen from plate 15 issued to the residents of Purankarambai nadu, who on receipt of the grant honoured it by placing the royal order on their heads. The lands endowed to the Buddhist temples are to be located in the area round the modern Tannilappadi (Danamalippundi ?) enclosed on the east by Naranaman-galam, on the south by Ottaittittai, on the west by Vandalur (corrupted and shortened form of—Vandalai-Velur ?) and on the north by Akalankan or Kalasappadi. An exploration of the area, particularly Ottaittittai may perhaps lead to the discovery of the site of the temples and relics of the Buddhist monastery.

## APPENDIX I.

### BUDDHA JAYANTI EXHIBITION.

In the following pages details of the various exhibits that formed the Buddha (Parinirvana) Jayanti Exhibition organized at the Madras Museum under the auspices of the Government of Madras, are given.

The people of India have always regarded the Buddha with feelings of the highest reverence and have never forgotten the great lessons and values which he taught. This Exhibition had been organized to give the people a visual idea of the place of Lord Buddha in world culture—a picture of the Master through the religious art and architecture of Asia.

The Exhibition had two broad divisions—the permanent collections of Buddhist sculptures and other antiquities in the Buddhist Galleries, and the collections of murals, photographs, etc., specially got together for the present exhibition, arranged mostly in the Centenary Halls I and II.

The Amaravati Marbles from the stupa at Amaravati (Guntur district) which goes back to Asokan times, are the pride of the Madras Museum, and have a very important place in the world of Indian art. The model of the stupa will give the visitor some idea of the monument as it stood in all its glory enshrining a relic of the Buddha.

The *Guide to the Buddhist Galleries*, gives details about the sculptures from Amaravati. A few select pieces of sculptures were specially labelled to draw attention to points of interest. Photographic enlargements of ornaments, furniture, houses, musical instruments, characteristic poses in the figure sculpture, etc., were exhibited on two screens. Special attention of visitors is drawn to (1) the standing Buddha image, 8 feet high, from Kanchipuram, 7th century A.D. and (2) the inscribed stone relic casketa from Bhattiprolu, where was another stupa of the Krishna valley.

### CENTENARY HALL I.

*In the passage—*

1. Poet Sittalai Sattanar's tribute to the Buddha (*Manimekalai*, *Kalai V*, lines, 98-106).  
Original Tamil verses with English translation.
2. Asoka's Girnar Rock Edict No. 2. In this edict Asoka mentions of his having made arrangements for medical help for men and animals, not only in his dominions, but also among neighbours such as the Cholas, Pandyas, Satiyaputras, Keralaputras and people of Tamraparni.
3. *Pasca Sila* in Pali, with translation into Tamil and English.
4. *Ashta marya* (Eight-fold Path) in Pali, with translation into Tamil and English.

*Bodhidharma—*

Painting (lent by Sri G. Venkataswatham). This great teacher from South India spread Buddhism in China.



*Sculptures from the 3rd century A.D. stupa at Goli village in Guntur district—*

1. Seated Buddha.
2. Empty throne and deer.
3. Frieze, showing the story of Vessantara, the generous Prince: (a) Prince Vessantara; (b) Presentation of the elephant; (c) The banished Prince and his wife Madri; (d) The Prince and his wife; (e) The princely couple carry away their children; (f) The Prince presents his children; (g) Madri's return; (h) The King, father of Vessantara and (i) Yakshi.
4. Slab with stupa.
5. Frieze. (a) Nagaraja; (b) A pair of human figures; (c) and (d) Two scenes from the Chhadanta Jataka (story of the noble six-tusked elephant); (e) A pair of human figures; (f) Buddha's visit to Yasodhara; (g) A pair of human figures; (h) The Buddha taming the Brerce elephant, Nalagiri; (i) A pair of human figures and (j) Nagaraja.
6. Worship of the stupa.
7. Mati-posaka Jataka (story of the noble elephant that served its blind mother).
8. Sasa Jataka (story of the hare which sacrificed itself to keep its word).
9. Frieze in three panels: (a) Temptation of Bodhisattva; (b) A pair of human figures and (c) The story of Sujata feeding the Bodhisattva.
10. Large slab showing Siddhartha attended by dwarf yakshas.

*Mahayana Buddhist images from Amaravati—*

1. Buddha (Fig. 10)
2. Simhanada, one of the Avalokitesvaras. (Fig. 11.)
3. Manjughosha, one of the Avalokitesvaras. (Fig. 12.)

*Antiquities from the stupa (200 B.C.) at Bhattiprolu in Guntur district (in show-case No. 1)—*

1. Hexagonal crystal head with inscription in Brahmi characters of about 200 B.C.
2. Crystal reliquary in the form of a circular box.
3. Crystal reliquary in stupa shape.
4. Do.
5. Gold flowers beads, coins, etc., which were placed in the stone casket.

*Amaravati Bronzes, 5th—6th century A.D. (in show-case No. 2)—*

1. Buddha standing.—Right hand varada, left hand holding one end of his robe which covers the left shoulder leaving the right one bare (Fig. 8.).
2. Standing Buddha.—Left foot broken and missing. The image is cast hollow. Right hand is in abhaya pose.
3. Buddha standing.—Head missing. Left forearm and feet are broken. Right hand is in vyakhyana mudra pose.



4. Head of Buddha.—With prominent *ushnisha*. The eyes and *urna* in the forehead are inlaid with gold.

(These are the earliest-known South Indian bronzes.)

*Nagapattinam Bronzes* (In show case Nos. 3 and 4).—

From the 8th to 17th century A.D. Nagapattinam had a monastery, probably for the benefit of Buddhist visitors from Malaya, Java and Sumatra. King Chudamani Varman of Sumatra began a monastery here which his son completed. The images described below were discovered from the site of the Buddhist institutions at Nagapattinam.

1. Maitreya.—Bodhisattva in *tribhanga* pose on a circular *padmasana*. The image has four arms the upper right with rosary, upper left with a flower stalk from which spring twelve flowers and two buds; lower right in *varada*, and lower left in *kataka* poses. About 1100 A.D. (Fig. 28.)
2. Seated Buddha.—Hands in *dhyana* pose, seated on an elegant triangular *padmasana*. The *prabha* is in three parts. 11th century A.D. (Fig. 27.)
3. Buddha.—On a circular *padmasana*. Long robe thrown over the body, leaving the right chest and arm bare. Right hand in *abhaya* pose. 10th century A.D. (Fig. 14.)
4. Jambhala and Vasudhara.—Seated on an oval *padmasana* in the *lalita* pose, Jambhala with right leg hanging down and kicking a bag of riches. Right hand holds a lime fruit, left a mongoose. To the left of Jambhala is seated on the same *padmasana* his consort Vasudhara, also in *lalita* pose. 11th century A.D.
5. Monk.—Standing with hands in *anjali*. Probably represents Ananda. Type, South Indian.
6. Maitreya.—Standing on a circular *padmasana* in *tribhanga*. Right hand *abhaya*. Left with a bunch of flowers, probably *nagapushpas*.
7. Jātamakuta Lokeshvara.—Standing on *padmasana*, with four hands. Upper right hand holds rosary, upper left a *bandika*, the lower right in *varada*, and the lower left holds a flower. Early Chola period.
8. Votive stupa.—Bell-shaped, with four lotuses embossed on its sides, and with *harmita* surmounted by an umbrella. Early Chola period.
9. Tara.—Seated in the *lalita* pose on *padmasana*. Right hand is in *varada* and the left holds a flower. 11th century A.D.
10. Maitreya.—It is bronze gilt. Stands on *padmasana*. Wears the usual ornaments. The sacred thread is thrown over the right arm as in Pallava sculptures, 9th century A.D. From Melayur, Shiyali taluk, Tanjore district. (Fig. 13.)





*Nepal and Tibet.* (In show-case Nos. 5 and 6).—

1. Buddha.—From Tibet. Seated on a *padmasana* with right hand in *varada* and left hand in *dhyana*. *Ushabha* is present and is painted over.
2. Siva.—From Nepal with three heads and six hands, seated on a *padmasana* and with his Sakti sitting on his lap. Right row of hands show *jvara*, *kataka* and *varada*, left row shows book, *kataka* and *abhaya*. Sakti has only two hands. Coronet adorns her head.
3. Lanka (Buddhist image from Tibet).—Profusely gilt. Face and hair are painted. The image which is in five parts is seated on a *padmasana* of elaborate workmanship. The right hand is in *abhaya* pose, while the left is in *avaya* (calling) pose.

*Buddhist Manuscripts.*—

1. Burmese Manuscript with red and gold embossed cover contains Buddhist scripture.
2. Chinese scroll in a box contains Buddhist scripture.
3. One decorated leaf of Buddhist Tripitaka in Maithili script.

(These have been kindly lent by the Adyar Library and Research Center, Madras.)

*Sankaracharya.*—

Plaster-cast of the original in the Siva temple at Tiruvorriyur near Madras. The great Hindu Acharya was second to none in his regard for Lord Buddha.

*Gandhara Buddha.*—

Plaster-cast of an original in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.

*Bull Capital.*—

From Rampurva in the Uttar Pradesh, 3rd century B.C. (Model).

*Buddha from Mathura.*—

5th century A.D. (Model).

*Great stupa of Sanchi* (Model).—

### Murals—First Series.

#### SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF THE BUDDHA.

The Buddha was a great *siddha* and he stood head and shoulders above the great teachers of other schools of thought of his own time. As in the case of Jesus Christ and Prophet Mohammad the life of the Buddha was also full of significant and even miraculous events. They naturally became the subject not only for elegant literary compositions but also for magnificent pictorial and sculptural representations belonging to different periods and countries. A selection of scenes representing familiar and important events in the life of the Buddha, as visualised by the classical sculptors and painters of the Buddhist world have been re-interpreted for the Buddha Jayanti Exhibition of Madras by the two artists of Madras Sri S. Dhanapal and Sri K. Srinivasulu. As far as possible they have tried to retain in their murals the atmosphere of Sanchi, Ajanta, Borobudur, etc.

**1. *The Bodhisattva in heaven—***

Before he was born as the son of Maya, Siddhartha was in the Tushita Heaven (Heaven of Bliss). In response to the appeal of the devas he took birth in the world in order to save humanity by proclaiming the Dharma. In this mural the Bodhisattva (Buddha in his previous existence) is seated on a throne attended by the devas.

—Based on a Nagarjunakonda sculpture—2nd century A.D.

**2. *Descent of the Bodhisattva—***

Having decided to be born in the world, the Bodhisattva took the shape of a white elephant in which form he was carried in a palanquin by divine beings to the earth. In this panel the palanquin is being supported by dwarfs. Devas are shown flying in front and in the rear.

—Based on a Nagarjunakonda sculpture.

**3. *Maya's dream—***

The same night, Maya, the queen of Suddhodana, dreamt that a white elephant was entering her womb through her right side. This dream meant that she would become the mother of a prince of exalted nature. The panel shows Maya reclining on a couch. Above on the border is shown the descent of an elephant. She is attended by four men who are Lokapalas.

—Based on a Nagarjunakonda sculpture.

**4. *Birth of Siddhartha—***

Just as the Bodhisattva entered through the right side of Maya when she conceived, he came out miraculously through her right side; in early sculptures this scene is represented as follows. Maya holds the branch of a tree. On her right, four Lokapalas hold a long piece of cloth on which would be seven foot-prints suggesting not only the presence of the Bodhisattva but also the story that he took seven steps immediately after his birth. Later on, the steps were replaced by baby Siddhartha. In this panel the latter version is shown.

—Based on a Japanese painting of the 17th century A.D.

**5. *Siddhartha in his antahpura—***

Siddhartha grew up in all princely comforts. But being naturally introspective, he was dissatisfied with the worldly things. This thought was strengthened by his four encounters with misery, disease, old age and death. During the early parts of the night of his renunciation, the women of ravishing beauty, sleeping in his apartment in unseemly postures appeared repulsive to him. He resolved to leave his home. In this panel, the Bodhisattva is shown seated on a throne surrounded by sleeping women.

—Based on an Amaravati sculpture.

**6. *Mahabhinishkramana—***

When he left the palace it was the dead of night. He rode on his horse Kanthaka preceded by Channa his charioteer. The well-guarded gates of the palace were opened by the devas. To avoid even the slightest noise, the hoofs of the horse were supported by dwarfs. In this manner before dawn he reached the river Neranjana. In this panel the horse is shown prominently. Siddhartha's presence on it is suggested by the umbrella above. The horse goes past by a Vriksha Chaitiya and reaches near the river.

—Based on a Sanchi sculpture.



7. *Ascetic Siddhartha—*

After becoming a sanyasin he spent some time with reputed religious teachers. Not satisfied with their methods, Siddhartha went to a forest near Buddha Gaya and did penance for six years in the company of five other ascetics. During this period he subsisted sometimes on leaves, sometimes even went without any food and so he became very emaciated. In this panel the emaciated Siddhartha is shown in an extremely realistic manner.

—Based on a Gandhara sculpture—2nd century A.D.

8. *Sujata feeding the Bodhisattva—*

At the end of six years of penance, Siddhartha could not find out the Truth for which he was striving. He, however, came to the conclusion that no amount of physical mortification would lead to the realisation of the Truth and to salvation. He therefore decided to tread a middle path by taking food. On his way he stayed at Uruvilva where Sujata, the daughter of the chief of the village, fed Siddhartha with specially prepared milk-rice. In this scene Siddhartha is shown seated on a *pitha* enclosed in a *mantapa*. In front of him stands Sujata holding a vessel containing food. Her attendants are behind her.

—Based on a representation from the stupa of Borobudur (Java)—8th century A.D.

9. *Mara, the God of evil, trying to foil Siddhartha's resolve—*

After taking the food offered by Sujata, Siddhartha went to a nearby place where stood an *asvattha* tree. He sat underneath the tree with the firm resolve not to move even a bit till he had found out the Truth. During the early part of that night, Mara, the god of evil, tried his best to wear Siddhartha from his resolution, but in vain. At dawn, next day, Siddhartha not only became victorious over the evil forces that assailed him but also attained supreme enlightenment. In this panel Siddhartha is seated on a pedestal and is surrounded by goblins, the hosts of Mara, and beautiful damsels, Mara's daughters.

—Based on a wall painting from Ajanta—6th century A.D.

10. *Worship of the Bodhi-tree—*

From the time of Siddhartha's enlightenment, Gaya became famous and the pipal tree under which he attained enlightenment came to be revered as the Bodhi-tree. His seat under the tree came to be known as the Vajrasana.

—Based on a sculpture from Bharhut—2nd century B.C.

11. *Buddha preaching his First Sermon—*

The Buddha was not quite prepared to teach to the world the Truth he had discovered, but in response to the request of Brahma he decided to preach his doctrine. He went to Rishipatana (Sarnath) near Banaras where in the Mrigadava (deer-park) he preached his first sermon to the five ascetics who were his former companions while doing penance. Through this First Sermon the Buddha set the Dharmachakra (Wheel of Law) in motion. In this panel the Buddha is seated on a throne with his hands in the *dharmachakra pravartana mudra*. On the pedestal is shown a wheel flanked by couchant deer on either side. The deer represent the deer-park of Sarnath.

—Based on a sculpture of Sarnath—5th century A.D.



12. *Worship of the Dharmachakra—*

Like the Bodhi-tree and the Vajrasana, the wheel as representing the Buddhist Dharma also became an object of great reverence. This panel shows the wheel decorated with garlands, etc., enshrined in a small temple and worshipped by people.

—Based on a sculpture from Bharhut—2nd century B.C.

13. *Rahula asks for his inheritance—*

During his itinerary, the Buddha, at the request of Sudhodana, visited his native town Kapilavastu. While he was there Yasodhara presented Rahula to the Buddha whom Rahula asked for his patrimony. The Buddha, instead of giving Rahula the kingdom, ordered him to be ordained as a monk. In this panel the Buddha in the dress of monk with a halo behind his head is shown at one end. The boy Rahula supported by his mother Yasodhara is shown at the other end.

—Based on a sculpture from Amaravati—2nd century A.D.

14. *Conversion of Nanda—*

The Buddha had a cousin by name Nanda, who was immersed in the pleasures of life in the company of his beautiful wife Janapadakalyani. The Buddha went to him and asked him to become a monk. Though Nanda did not at once become a monk he reluctantly followed the Buddha. The Buddha understood his mind and wanted to turn him completely out of worldly desires. So he, followed by Nanda, flew to heaven, where Nanda was shown the nymphs of great beauty under the Kalpaka tree. The Buddha told Nanda that if he meditated properly he would be able to get the nymphs. When Nanda began to practice the life of a true monk, he became an arhat. In this panel the Buddha and Nanda are shown flying. The nymphs are under the heavenly tree.

—Based on a sculpture from Amaravati—2nd century A.D.

15. *Sudharma Devasabha—*

In this panel the building represents the court hall of the devas called the Sudharma. Inside it is kept the head-dress of the Buddha.

—Based on a sculpture from Bharhut—2nd century B.C.

16. *Miracle at Sravasti—*

In order to dispel the doubt entertained by his opponents that he could not perform any miracle, the Buddha while at Sravasti rose up in the air and multiplied himself.

—Based on a sculpture from Sarnath—5th century A.D.

17. *Prasenajit visits the Buddha—*

Kosala was one of the powerful kingdoms during the time of the Buddha. King Prasenajit was its ruler. Whenever the Buddha visited his country, Prasenajit used to welcome him warmly. In this panel the king and his followers are shown on the left. His worship of the Buddha, represented by a throne with serpent on it, is shown in the right. In between these two scenes is the art motif called *mithuna* (couple).

—Based on a Bharhut sculpture—2nd century B.C.



18. *Indra's visit to Buddha—*

The Buddha was for a while in the Indrasaila cave near Rajagriha, when Indra visited him. He was preceded by his musician, Panchasikha. In this panel the Buddha is shown in the hollow of a cave in a forest which is suggested by the presence of wild animals. Indra, with his characteristic crown on his head, is shown on the right of the cave in a reverential attitude. The man with harp-like instrument in his hands on the left is Panchasikha.

—Based on a Gandhara sculpture—2nd century A.D.

19. *Anathapindika's gift of Jetavana—*

Anathapindika was a very rich man of Kosala. In order to make a gift of the beautiful garden called Jetavana to the Buddha, he purchased it by spreading the whole area of it with coins. The panel shows cartloads of coins being brought and spread on the ground. The square and rectangular punch-marked coins called *panas* were current during the Buddha's time.

Based on a Bharhut sculpture—2nd century B.C.

20. *Donation of Ambapali—*

Ambapali was a famous courtesan of Rajagriha. She became a lay disciple of the Buddha. Once during his visit to Rajagriha the Buddha accepted hospitality at her house rejecting the invitations from more important people. In the panel, Ambapali is shown on the right of the Buddha, holding a water vessel to make *dana* of her property.

—Based on a Gandhara sculpture—2nd century A.D.

21. *Taming of the fierce elephant Nalagiri—*

Devadatta, the jealous cousin of the Buddha, bribed an elephant-keeper to kill the Buddha by rushing a doped elephant as the Buddha was coming along the city street. But as soon as it heard the voice of the Buddha, the mad elephant, Nalagiri, knelt before the Buddha.

—Based on an Amaravati sculpture—2nd century A.D.

22. *Conversion of the Jätulas—*

Among the earliest converts of the Buddha were the Jätulas of Uruvela. The Buddha converted them by performing the miracle of walking on water.

—Based on a Sanchi sculpture—1st century B.C.

23. *Buddha's Parinirvana—*

At the age of eighty, the Buddha passed away at Kusinagara in the country of the Mallas. In the panel, the mourning devas flutter above, and the disciples in grief are shown surrounding the couch. The standing figure, with a lotus in his hand, at the feet of the dying Master is Ananda. In the lower border are shown mourning animals which are usually introduced in Chinese versions of Parinirvana.

—Based on an Ajanta sculpture—7th century A.D.





**24. The Stupa—**

This symbolises the Parinirvana of the Buddha. Very often the stupas contained relics of the Buddha or his disciples. Some stupas are commemorative and others votive.

—Based on an Amaravati sculpture—about 200 A.D.

*Two Thankas (on the back of show-cases 5 and 6)—*

A Thangka is a scroll-painting, in brilliant colours on cotton impregnated with lime, and mounted on Chinese brocade with a baton at either end, so that it could be rolled up like a map. The subtlest, most intimate creations of the Tibetan artist are to be seen on the innumerable thankas or banner scrolls which festoon every corner of the temples. Often they are sewn at regular distances on to a band of red and yellow silk, which is hung along the transverse beams that rest on the main columns in a sort of frieze, with the banners falling like fringes. Brilliant colour, fine detail and a vivid individual expression on the faces characterise these small compositions.

In the temple, though one seems to be surrounded by all the colours of the rainbow, the range of the palette is not very big. Half-tones and innumerable tints required when once shading has come to play a major part in a style, are absent. It is the extreme clearness of the colours and the skill displayed in their combination which is responsible for the variegated impression.

## **CENTENARY HALL II.**

### **Murals—Second Series.**

#### **JATAKAS AND AVADANAS.**

The Jatakas or Birth stories are the most popular vehicle for the ethical teaching of Buddhism. In the many fables and legends, there is an esoteric strand explaining the evolution of human consciousness. They are called birth stories because they refer to the past lives of the Buddha. Though Buddhism denies the existence of the soul (in the popular sense of the term) and denies also any post-mortem existence, what is believed to be re-born is the essence of character and the consequence of works (*Karma*). The most evolved character is Buddha-hood. The Jataka stories provided innumerable themes for the painter and sculptor.

**(1) Purnakumbha—**

The full-vase has been an auspicious symbol of India from very early times. In Buddhist sculpture it is said to represent the birth of the Buddha.

—Based on an Amaravati sculpture—1st century A.D.



**(2) Mahakapi Jataka—**

This is the highly ethical story of the leader of a group of monkeys, who saved his fellows from the king's soldiers who had surrounded their favourite mango tree on the river side. The monkey leader made himself part of a bridge from the mango tree to the opposite side of the river and was nearly killed in the process. This noble monkey was the Bodhisattva (Buddha-to-be).

—Based on a sculpture from Bharhut—2nd century B.C.

**(3) Shaddanta Jataka—**

Once the Buddha was born as a king of elephants which had six tusks. He had two queens, one of whom thought he was partial to the other. So she died after taking a vow to be born as the queen of the King of Banaras to wreak vengeance on her elephant husband. Accordingly she became in her subsequent birth the queen of Banaras. She induced the king to send a hunter to procure the six tusks of her former lord wishing thereby to kill him. The hunter could not himself kill the elephant but got the tusks with the help of the elephant. The elephant died soon after this. When the hunter related the story of the noble elephant as he presented the tusks to the queen, she realized her fault and died on the spot.

—Based on a sculpture from Amaravati—2nd century A.D.

**(4) Mayura Jataka—**

The Buddha was born as a golden peacock which was reputed for its knowledge of the Dharma. The King of Banaras failed several times in his attempt to catch the peacock. Finally a hunter caught it by means of a charm and brought it to Banaras. There the peacock preached the Law of Good Men to the king and queen. In the panel the royal couple in reverential pose are seated on the throne. The peacock with its spread-out plumage is shown in front of them, preaching the Dharma. The hunter, now a monk, is shown above.

—Based on an Amaravati sculpture—2nd century A.D.

**(5) Sara Jataka—**

Bodhisattva was once born as a hare, who with his two friends a monkey and another had to give offering to a holy man. On the appointed day, the hare had no gift ready, so he jumped into the fire so that the holy man might eat his flesh. But the holy man was Sakra who was testing his virtue, so the fire did not burn the hare.

—Based on a sculpture from Nagarjunakonda—2nd century A.D.

**(6) Vessantara Jataka—**

Prince Vessantara was so generous by nature that he could refuse no requests however troublesome they be. For giving away in charity, the rain-giving elephant, the king, his father, banished him. On his way to the forest he gifted away the cart and the bulls, his two children and finally his wife. But the Brahmana to whom he presented the princess was only Indra in disguise.

—Based on a sculpture from Goli village—3rd century A.D.



(7) *Vidhurapandita Jataka*—

The Bodhisattva was born as Vidhura, the wise minister of Kaurava, the King of Indraprastha. The queen of the Naga king wanted to hear him preach the Dharma. Instead of saying this plainly she told the king that she wanted Vidhura's heart. The king did not know how to get the heart of Vidhura. But due to his daughter Irandati's intervention, Purnaka, a Yaksha went to Indraprastha, won Vidhura from Kaurava and took him to Naga-Loka. On the way Purnaka wanted to kill Vidhura by throwing him down a hill to get his heart. But Vidhura escaped from this and taught the Dharma to the Yaksha, who afterwards took Vidhura in all reverence to Naga-Loka where he preached the Dharma to the Naga king and queen.

In the panel, on the top left the Yaksha and Irandati are shown. Below, the Yaksha takes leave of the Naga king and queen. In the central scene, below, the Yaksha is riding the horse and Vidhura is holding to the tail of the horse. Above the Yaksha is attempting to throw Vidhura down the hill. On the left Vidhura preaches the Dharma to the Yaksha. On the extreme right the king and queen of the Nagas are shown hearing the law from Vidhura seated in front of them. The Yaksha is shown at the entrance.

—Based on a Bharhut sculpture—2nd century B.C.

(8) *Kavikumaravadana*—

The King of Panchala had two wives, Lakshana and Sudharma. Though Lakshana's son succeeded to the throne, Sudharma's son Kavikumara, who was the Bodhisattava, born after his father's death, was destined to become the king. Prince Kavikumara was hunted by his cousin but escaped several times and did ultimately gain the throne, with the magic jewel given by his mother. In the mural the horsemen on the left go about in search of the Prince. In the right lower panel the horsemen are duped by the Prince by escaping in a bundle of clothes. In the top right part the Prince is shown as a corpse the people surrounding him pretending to mourn his death. This was another trick by which the Prince escaped the fury of the ruling king.

—Based on an Amaravati sculpture—2nd century A.D.

(9) *Dipankara Jataka*—

In an earlier birth Gautama was born as a Brahmana called Sumedha. Then the Buddha Dipankara (one of the earlier Buddhas) was preaching the Dharma. When the Buddha Dipankara had to cross a muddy place, Sumedha spread his hair on it to enable the Buddha Dipankara to cross the muddy spot by walking on his hair. For this meritorious act, Sumedha was destined to become Gautama Buddha.

—Based on a Gandhara sculpture—2nd century A.D.

(10) *Sibi Jataka*—

King Sibi was a personification of kindness. A dove, escaping from a hunter, took refuge on his lap. The king offered the hunter his own flesh in the place of the dove. The painting shows the dove taking shelter in the king's lap and the king cutting off his muscle to the consternation of the men and women in his court.

Based on a Nagarjunakonda sculpture—2nd century A.D.



(11) *King Udayana and his noble Queen Samavati—*

Of Udayana's two queens, Samavati was very virtuous, while Magandiya was very jealous. Magandiya placed a serpent in the shell of the king's vina and told him that Samavati did it. The foolish king shot an arrow at Samavati, but the arrow miraculously did not hurt her. Udayana understood the greatness of Samavati and fell at her feet, but she asked the king to take refuge in the Buddha.

—Based on a sculpture from Amaravati—2nd century A.D.

(12) *The Sinhala Avadana—*

Five hundred merchants, after the wreck of their boats, were cast ashore near the City of Ogresses who lured the merchants by their charms. In the night, the ogresses began to slay and eat the merchants. The Bodhisattava, who was then born as a 'flying horse' passed over the city and helped the two hundred and fifty merchants to escape.

—Based on an Ajanta mural—7th century A.D.

(13) *Buddhapada—*

In Buddhist symbolism, the pair of feet of the Buddha always stand for his presence. They are usually marked with a wheel in the centre of the soles and other auspicious marks like *svastika*, *srivatsa*, flag, fish, etc., on the heels and toes, marks which are characteristic of a *mahapurushas*.

—Based on a sculpture from Amaravati—2nd century A.D.

## CENTENARY HALLS I AND II.

### Photographs of Buddhist works of Art and Architecture.

Essentially humane and sublime in character Buddhism produced an urbanity and goodness in those who embraced it. These qualities are reflected in every one of their activities, literature, graphic arts, architecture, etc. Both in the land of its birth and wherever it spread, it has inspired innumerable monuments and works of art of high standard. Examples of such magnificent works of art produced under the influence of Buddhism in the various countries of Asia are represented here by photographs.

*Tamil-nad* was influenced by Buddhism probably very soon after its birth. It is known that here the Theravada school was in vogue at Kanchipuram. As Theravada did not favour very much the building of chaityas and making of images and sculptures, few Buddhist monuments have survived here. But from about the 8th century A.D. there appear to have existed Buddhist colonies in various parts of Tamil-nad. Photographs of Buddhist images from such places as Pondicherry and Tiruvalanjali are shown here.

*Andhradesa* became a great centre of Buddhism very early. The Buddhists here were of the Chaityaka school who introduced the worship of chaityas and stupas. Hence there existed here in various places large stupas embellished with sculptures. Original specimens of sculptures from such places as Amaravati and Jaggayapeta are shown in the Buddhist gallery. Here photographs of sculptures, etc., from Nagarjunakonda, Sankaram and other places are shown.





*South Kanara* has a few vestiges of Buddhism. The rock-cut caves and the temple at *Kadri* near *Mangalore* probably belonged to Buddhism. The photographs shown here are of the beautiful Buddhist bronzes of *Chola* type that are found in the *Kadri Manjunatha* temple of which the three-headed figure has a Sanskrit inscription in the *Grantha* characters of the 10th century A.D.

*Western India* has a number of rock-cut temples and monasteries in such places as *Bhaja*, *Bedaa*, *Nasik*, *Karle*, *Kanheri* and *Junnar*, some of them dating from about 200 B.C. The early caves did not have figures of the Buddha and other deities, as they belonged to the *Theravada* school. During the *Gupta* times, due to *Mahayanist* influence, the walls of the caves were carved with bas-relief sculptures representing the Buddha and other deities. Photographs of some of these caves are shown here.

*Western Deccan* has the famous groups of rock-cut caves at *Ajanta*, *Aurangabad* and *Ellora*. Of these the caves at *Ajanta* belong to two different periods, the five earlier ones dating from about the 1st century B.C. and the remaining twenty-five belonging to the times of the *Vakatakas*, 5th-6th centuries A.D. Photographs of some of the caves and reproductions of a few panels of wall paintings from here are shown.

*Central India* has several reputed ancient Buddhist centres of which *Sanchi* was the most famous. The earlier, original stupa encased later in the great stupa is said to have been constructed by *Asoka* when he was Viceroy at *Ujjain*. Enlargements of the gateways of the stupa and encasement of a few sculptured architraves of the toranas of the great stupa are shown here.

*Mathura*, an ancient city, became a great centre of Buddhism even before *Asoka's* time. But it became the greatest centre of the religion as well as of Indian art when the *Kushanas* ruled over the region. Some of the masterpieces of Indian sculpture were done here. Photographs of a few of the masterpieces are shown, of which the enlargement of the Buddha of the *Gupta* period is noteworthy.

*Bharhut* was another important centre of Buddhism with a noteworthy stupa. It was begun about the 3rd century B.C. and was enlarged by the *Sunga* kings of the 2nd century B.C. The stupa was decorated with bas-reliefs in folk style. All the remains of this stupa are now housed in the *Indian Museum*, *Calcutta*.

*Buddha Gaya*, the famous place where the Buddha attained enlightenment, has been one of the greatest Buddhist pilgrim centres. The temple here was perhaps begun about the 2nd century A.D. but attained its huge size about the 5th century A.D. The present superstructure was renovated about the 12th century A.D. by a *Burmese* king. The temple tower is one of the earliest of its class.

*Sarnath*, situated at distance of about 4 miles from *Banaras* is the ancient *Rishipatana* with the *mrigadana* (deer-park) where the Buddha preached his Sermon for the first time. Ever since it has been a great pilgrim centre. Stupas and sculptures belonging to various periods exist here of which the *Dharmarajika* and the *Dhamek* stupas, the *Asokan* Lion capital and the *Dharma-chakrapravartana* Buddha of the *Gupta* times are noteworthy.



*Nalanda* was another centre of Buddhism. Here was the famous Buddhist University started during the time of the early Guptas by Vasubandhu and Asanga, and which attracted pupils from all over Asia, and which also sent out great teachers. During the Pala period, Tantric Buddhism originated here. Images belonging to this form of Buddhism have been discovered here and such other places as Kurkihar. Photographs of antiquities from such places as Piprahwa where we have the earliest known stupa are also shown.

*Gandhara*, present North-Western Frontier Province of Pakistan, became Buddhist from about 1st century B.C. Buddhist monuments and sculptures of the 1st to 7th centuries A.D. in Graeco-Roman style have been discovered in large quantities. Gandharan stucco figures of about the 4th and 5th centuries A.D. are noteworthy among them.

*Central Asia* was much influenced by Buddhism during the Gupta times although even during earlier periods it served as the passage for transmitting the Dharma to China. In such places as Khotan and Turfan were discovered from under sand-dunes a number of Buddhist stupas and caves containing eekasid stucco-sculptures of the Buddha and wall paintings dating from the 6th to 10th centuries A.D. The art of painting of Ajanta was probably transmitted to China through these places.

*Nepal and Tibet* became the abode of Vajrayana Buddhism which still thrives there. Essentially theistic of the type of Indian Saivism, the Nepalese and Tibetan religions are responsible for numerous images of Buddhist deities in metal and also painted on silk (*thambas*) showing the Buddhist deities in *mandala* form.

*Ceylon* was converted to Buddhism during Asoka's time and it has remained the headquarters of the Theravada school. It was here that the Buddhist Pali Canon was written down in the 1st century B.C. From the 3rd century B.C., Buddhist stupas and viharas were raised here in such places as Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, the earlier and later capitals respectively of Ceylon.

*Burma* though officially a Theravada country, the religion practised here is a mixture of both Hinayana and Mahayana. King Anawrahta of Pagan (11th century A.D.) was responsible for some of the most beautiful Buddhist temples in Burma.

*Thailand and Indo-China*. The Siamese contacted Buddhism before migrating south from their native China. They apparently acquired at first the Mahayana Buddhism and later the Theravada. During the 14th and 15th centuries A.D. the power of Siam extended and its fame as a great Buddhist power spread rapidly abroad. About the year 1350 A.D. the large, magnificent and intensely Buddhist city of Ayuthia was built. In Cambodia the religion was a blend of Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism until the 14th century and this had largely influenced the history and art of the famous temple at Angkor. Later the Siamese influence became paramount. But in contrast to Siamese Buddhism there is a strong element of Hinduism in Cambodian Buddhism.

*Indonesia*. During the Sailendra period, various Buddhist temples arose in Java and Sumatra. The earliest of these is the Chandi Kalasan. The relics of the small chapels at Chandi Sewa at Prambanam are more beautiful. At Chandi Mendut lovely figures of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are preserved.



At Borobudur, is a stupa built in the form of Meru. It has a series of seated Buddha figures and a magnificent series of reliefs illustrating the life of Buddha according to the *Lalitavistara*, *Jatakamala*, etc. It dates from the 8th-9th century A.D.

The other Buddhist temples are Chandi-Plaasan and Chandi Jago at Sinhasari. Chandi Jabung with unique circular tower, in far eastern Java, dates from 1354 A.D.

*China.* Buddhism was introduced into China during the first century A.D. Since that time eminent Indian and Chinese monks visited each other's country on many occasions and gradually translations of Buddhist scriptures were made. The careers of Fa-Hien and Hsuan-Tsang are well known. After the 6th and 7th centuries A.D., Buddhism in China gradually formed around a number of schools each having its own peculiar system of teaching. Chief among these schools were the Tientai, Chan (Dhyana), Chintu (Pure Land), Lu (Vinaya) and Mi (Tantric). During the Sui (581-618) and Tang (618-906) dynasties, Buddhism reached its full bloom in China and Buddhist architecture, sculptures and temples were found all over the country.

*Japan.* Buddhism was introduced into Japan through Korea in the 6th century A.D. Ever since its introduction the religion has maintained a fairly firm hold over the people of Japan. The new religion did not wipe out the native Shintoism from which it imbibed several principles. Of the various sects of Japanese Buddhism should be mentioned Tendai, Shingon, Jodo, Shinshu, Nichiren and Zen. Among these, "Zen" is a unique sect of "mystic meditation" and "Nichiren" is characterised by its violent attacks on other sects. Of Buddhist monuments special mention must be made of Horyuji temple built by Prince Shotoku Taishi, and the 42-foot high bronze image of Buddha at Kamakura.

*Egypt.* Head of Buddha (F). Terracotta. From Memphis.

(This photograph was lent by Prof. T. Balakrishnan Nair, Principal, Presidency College, Madras, and the following note about it is also by him.)

"Terracotta head of the Buddha from the foreign quarter at Memphis in Egypt, dating from the period of occupation of the city by the Persians—525 to 405 B.C.—modelled in solid clay. Height about 3".

"Sir Flinders Petrie who excavated the head calls it Tibetan. It has distinct Mongoloid features. Gautama the Buddha was born among the Sakyas, a sub-Himalayan people, who like the Koliyas, the Licchavis and the Moryias were of Mongoloid origin and therefore an Indo-Mongoloid ethnically like the Gorkhas of Nepal.

"The head of the Buddha is shaven but shows a top-knot, a crest or a crown which in later Indian art stood for the *ushnisha*. The Buddhist monk wears a full tonsure. But our figure has a chignon at the top of its head. Were it not for this and the apex represented as clinging to the head on either side confusion with any other monk would have been inevitable. From the Jataka stories which are as old as the compilation of the Buddhist Canon at the Council of Vaisali about 377 B.C. we learn that the Buddha in two of his former births was an ape.

"Not at Gandhara but at Memphis probably was the first Buddha image fabricated. In this figure we have the least prototype of the real Buddha—an Indo-Mongoloid by birth."



## APPENDIX II.

### Two recently discovered Buddhas.

By P. R. SRINIVASAN.

At Jayankondan in the Ariyalur taluk of the Tiruchirappalli district are found two stone images of the Buddha. Immediately on learning this, we wanted to acquire them for the Museum. Although at first there seemed to be some possibility of getting them, we now learn to our disappointment that there are some difficulties in our way of acquiring them and preserving them in the Museum. In view of their importance for our study of Buddhist images in South India, they are briefly described below :

*Buddha* (Fig. 41).—This is in the *padmasana* pose just like any other figure noticed above. The curls of hair on the head is beautifully arranged. The flame of fire on the head is, however, missing along with a part of the *prabha*. The interest of this figure lies in the *prabha-on-pillar* motif. The figure from Kuvam described above (page 98) Figure 32 was considered to be an early figure showing this motif. The manner in which the same motif is done in the figure in question will be seen to be intermediate between the Kuvam figure and the figure from Karadikuppam (Figure 31). So, this may be dated to 12th—13th century A.D.

*Buddha* (Fig. 42).—It is similar to above but for the workmanship of the *prabha-on-pillar* motif. Its place may be seen to be between the above figure (Fig. 41) and the Kuvam figure (Fig. 32). The noteworthy details of the *prabha* are the *makaras*, the angled crest and the creeper designs on the pillars. This figure may be assigned to the early 13th century A.D.





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FIG 1. RAHULA MEETING THE BUDDHA (marble).  
3RD CENTURY A.D.  
*Amaravati, Guntur District.*  
(In the Madras Museum).



FIG 2. BUDDHA AND NANDA FLYING (marble).  
3RD CENTURY A.D.  
*Nagarjunakonda.*







FIG 3. BUDDHA IN YASODHARA'S ROOM (marble).  
3RD CENTURY A.D.  
*Goli, Guntur District.*  
(In the Madras Museum).



PLATE III



FIG 4. BACK VIEW OF BUDDHA (marble).  
3RD CENTURY A.D.  
*Amaravati, Guntur District.*  
(In the Madras Museum).



FIG 5. TORSO OF BUDDHA (marble).  
3RD CENTURY A.D.  
*Nagarjunakonda.*





FIG 6. TORSO OF BUDDHA (marble).  
3RD - 4TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Vidyadharaपुरम.*  
(In the Madras Museum).





FIG 7. HEAD OF BUDDHA (marble).  
3RD-4TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Vidyadharapuram.*  
(In the Madras Museum).







FIG 8. BUDDHA (bronze).  
5TH - 6TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Amaravati, Guntur District.*  
(In the Madras Museum)



FIG 9. STANDING BUDDHA (granite).  
6TH - 7TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Kanchipuram.*  
(In the Madras Museum).





FIG 10. BUDDHA (granite).  
8TH-9TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Amarāvati, Guntur District.*  
(In the Madras Museum).





FIG 11. SIMHANADA (granite).  
8TH-9TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Amaravati, Guntur District.*  
(In the Madras Museum).





FIG 12. MANJUGHOSHA (granite).  
8TH - 9TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Amaravati, Guntur District.*  
(In the Madras Museum).







FIG. 13. MAITREYA (bronze-gilt).  
9TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Melayur, Tanjore District*  
(In the Madras Museum).

S.B -- 30A



FIG. 14. STANDING BUDDHA (bronze).  
10TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Nagapattinam, Tanjore District*  
(In the Madras Museum).



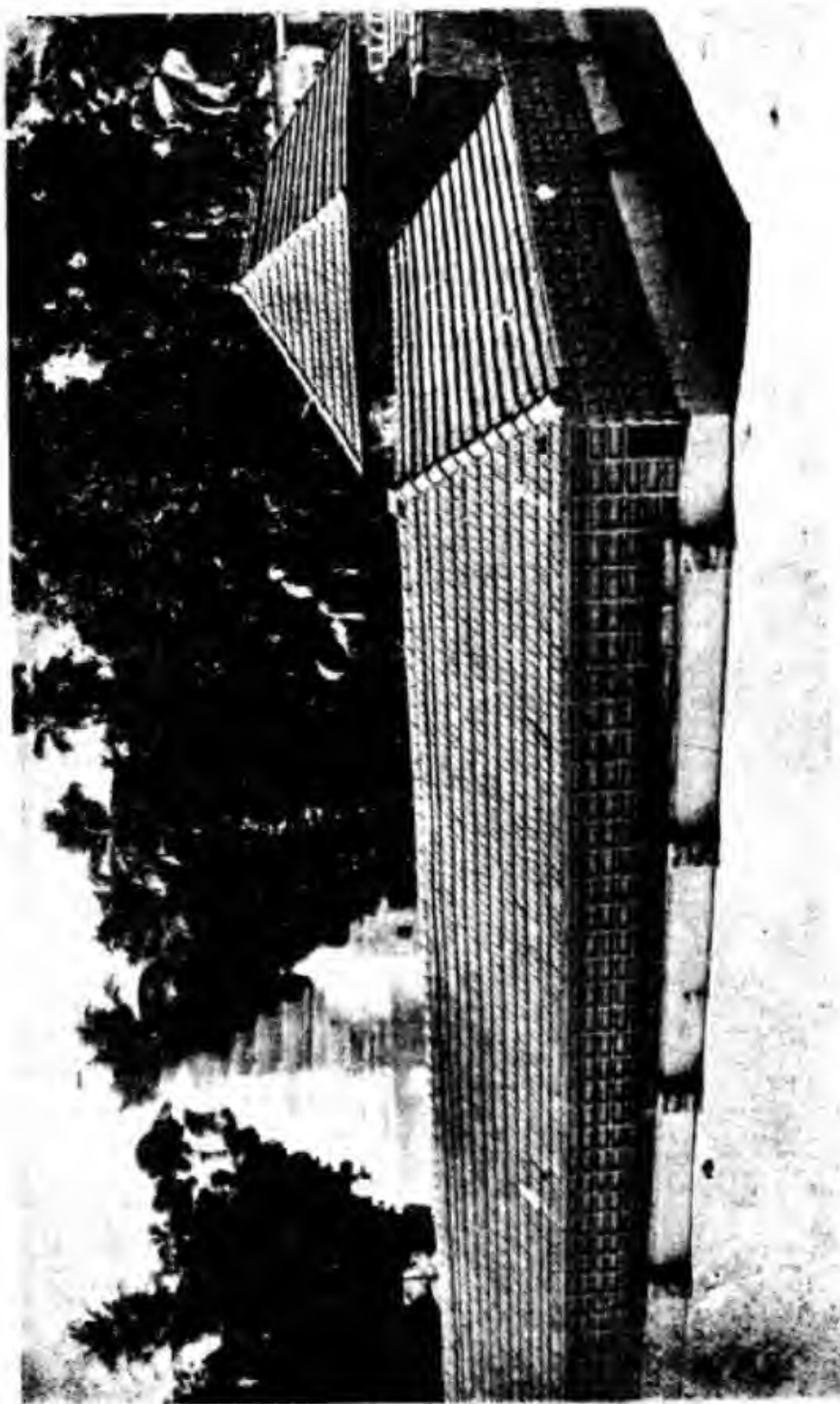


FIG 15. MANJUNATHA TEMPLE.  
*Kadri, near Mangalore.*





FIG 16. LOKANATHA (bronze).  
ABOUT 968 A.D.  
*Kadri, near Mangalore.*





FIG 17. HALAHALA LOKESVARA (bronze).  
968 A.D.  
*Kudri, near Mangalore.*







FIG 18. BUDDHA (granite).  
11TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Tyagamur, Salem District.*

S.B - 31A





FIG 19. BUDDHA (granite).  
11th CENTURY A.D.  
*Madagaram, Tanjore District.*  
(In the Tanjore Art Gallery, Tanjore.)





FIG 20. BUDDHA (granite).  
11TH CENTURY A.D.  
*At the Police Station, Siva Kanchipuram.*





FIG 21. BUDDHA (granite).  
11TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Tiruvetti, South Arcot District.*







FIG. 22. BUDDHA (granite).  
III<sup>rd</sup> CENTURY A.D.  
*Tyaganur, Salem District.*



PLATE XIX



FIG 23. BUDDHA (granite).  
11TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Tiruvalanjuli, Tanjore District.*





FIG 24. BUDDHA (granite).  
11TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Elaiyur, Tanjore District.*  
(In the Madras Museum.)





FIG 28. BUDDHA (granite).  
12TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Arikamedu, Pondicherry*







FIG 27. BODHISATTVA (bronze).  
12TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Nagapattinam, Tanjore District.*  
(In the Madras Museum.)





FIG 26. BUDDHA (granite).  
11TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Nagapattinam, Tanjore District.*  
(In the Madras Museum.)





FIG 25. BUDDHA (granite),  
11<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY A.D.  
*Jayankondacholapuram, Tiruchirappalli District.*





FIG 29. BUDDHA (granite).  
12TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Kanchipuram.*







FIG. 30. BUDDHA (granite).  
12TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Manambady, Tanjore District.*



FIG 31. BUDDHA (granite).  
12TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Karadikkuppam, Pondicherry.*





FIG 32. BUDDHA (granite).  
13TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Kuvam, Chingleput District.*  
(In the Madras Museum.)





FIG 33. BUDDHA (granite).  
13TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Karukkulamanda Amman temple, Kanchipuram.*







FIG 34. BUDDHA (granite).  
13TH CENTURY A.D.

*Karukkilamanda Amman temple, Kanchipuram.*

S.B -- 35A



FIG 35. BUDDHA (granite).  
14TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Manikandi, Ramanathapuram District.*  
(In the Madras Museum.)





FIG 36. BUDDHA (granite).  
14th - 15th CENTURY A.D.  
*Ekamresvarar temple, Kanchipuram.*

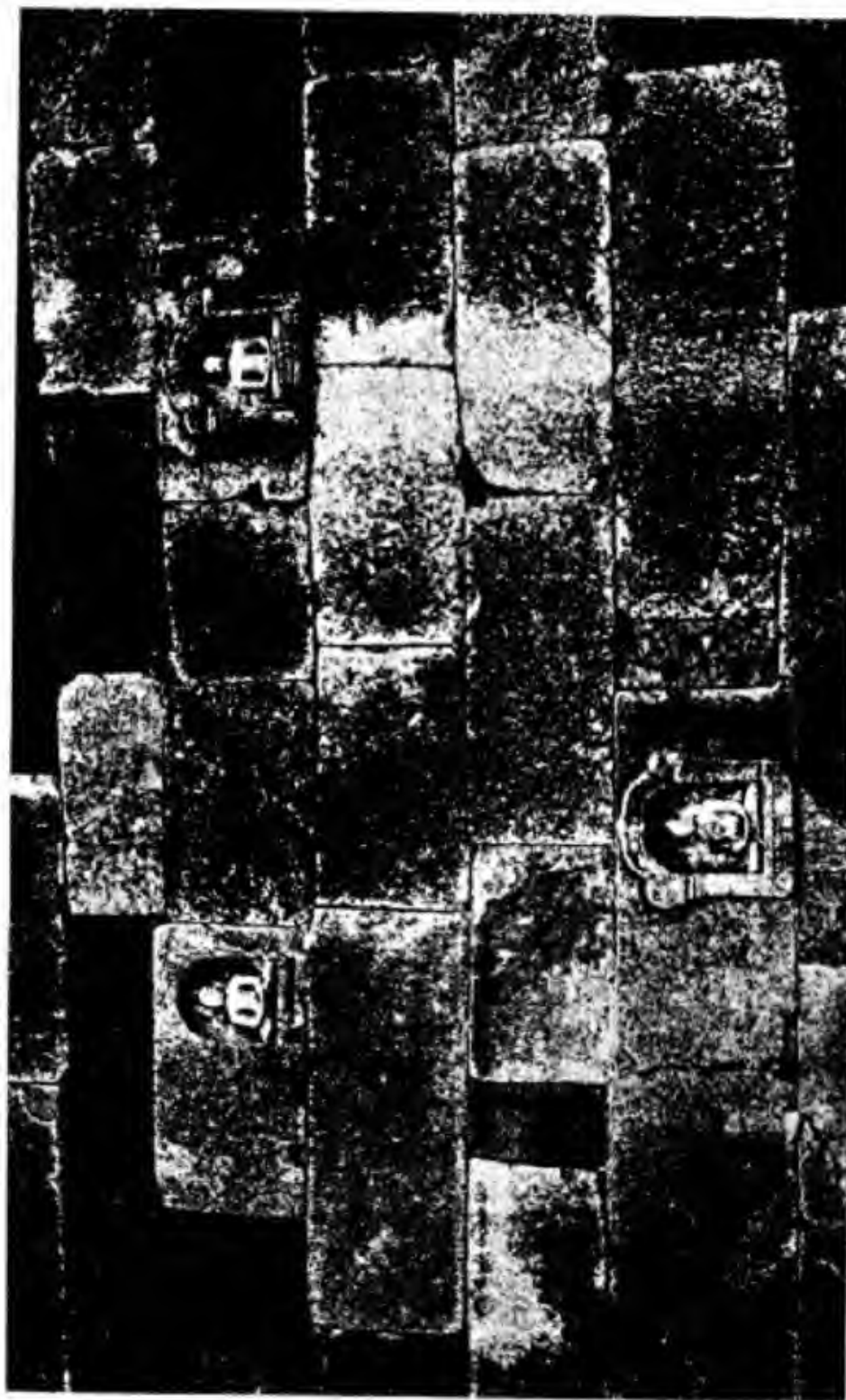


FIG. 37. BUDDHAS (on stone wall).  
14th - 15th CENTURY A.D.  
*Ekamreswarar temple, Kanchipuram.*



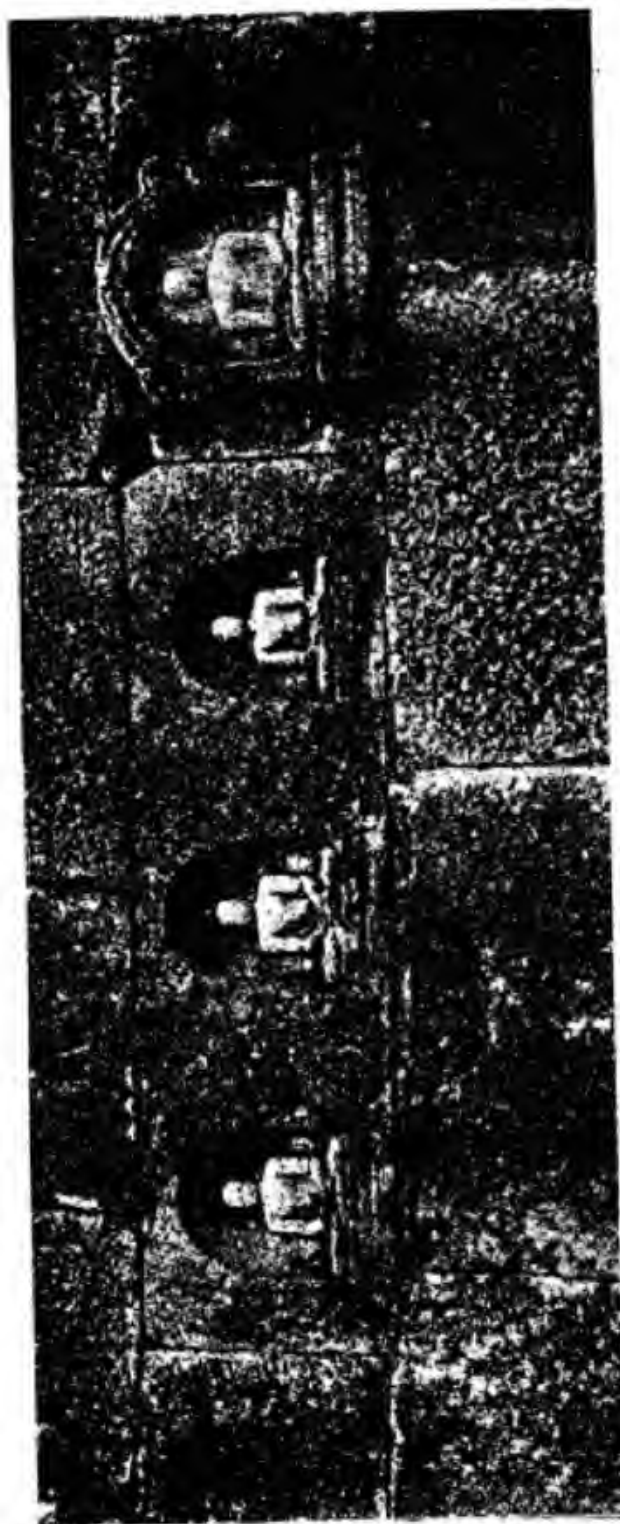


FIG. 38. BUDDHAS (on stone wall).  
14TH - 15TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Ekamreswarar temple, Kanchipuram.*

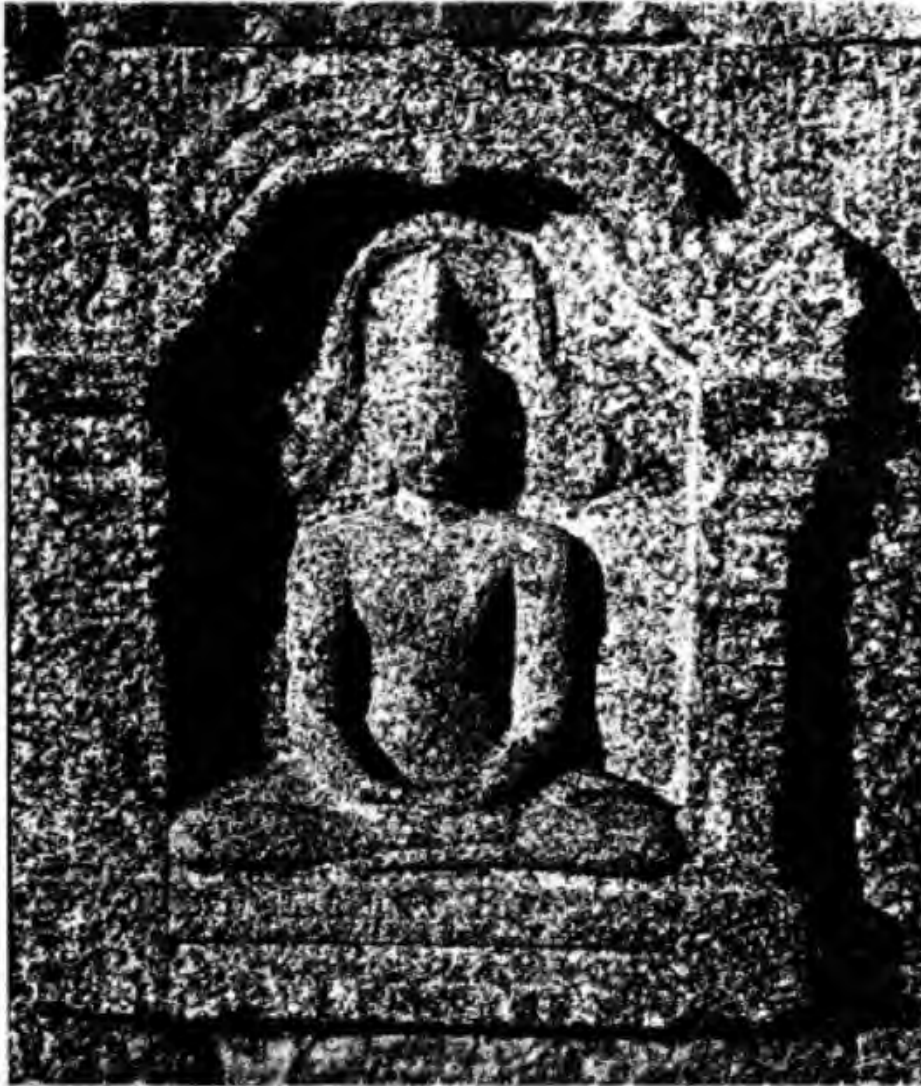


FIG 39. BUDDHA (on stone wall).  
14TH - 15TH CENTURY A.D.  
*Ekamresvarar temple, Kanchipuram.*







FIG. 40. SCENE FROM THE LIFE OF THE BUDDHA (granite).  
10TH - 11TH CENTURY A.D.  
*In the Big Temple, Tanjore.*



FIG 41. BUDDHA (granite).  
12<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY A.D.  
*Jayamkondan, Tiruchirappalli District.*





FIG 42. BUDDHA (granite).  
13<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY A.D.  
*Jayankondan, Tiruchirappalli District*





